

G.I. JOE

AMERICA'S MOST POPULAR WAR COMICS

10¢

No. 19

FEBRUARY-MARCH

G.I. Joe



**The Old Army Game . . .
BUCK PASSER**

The Rusty Rifle . . . THE MEEK SOLDIER



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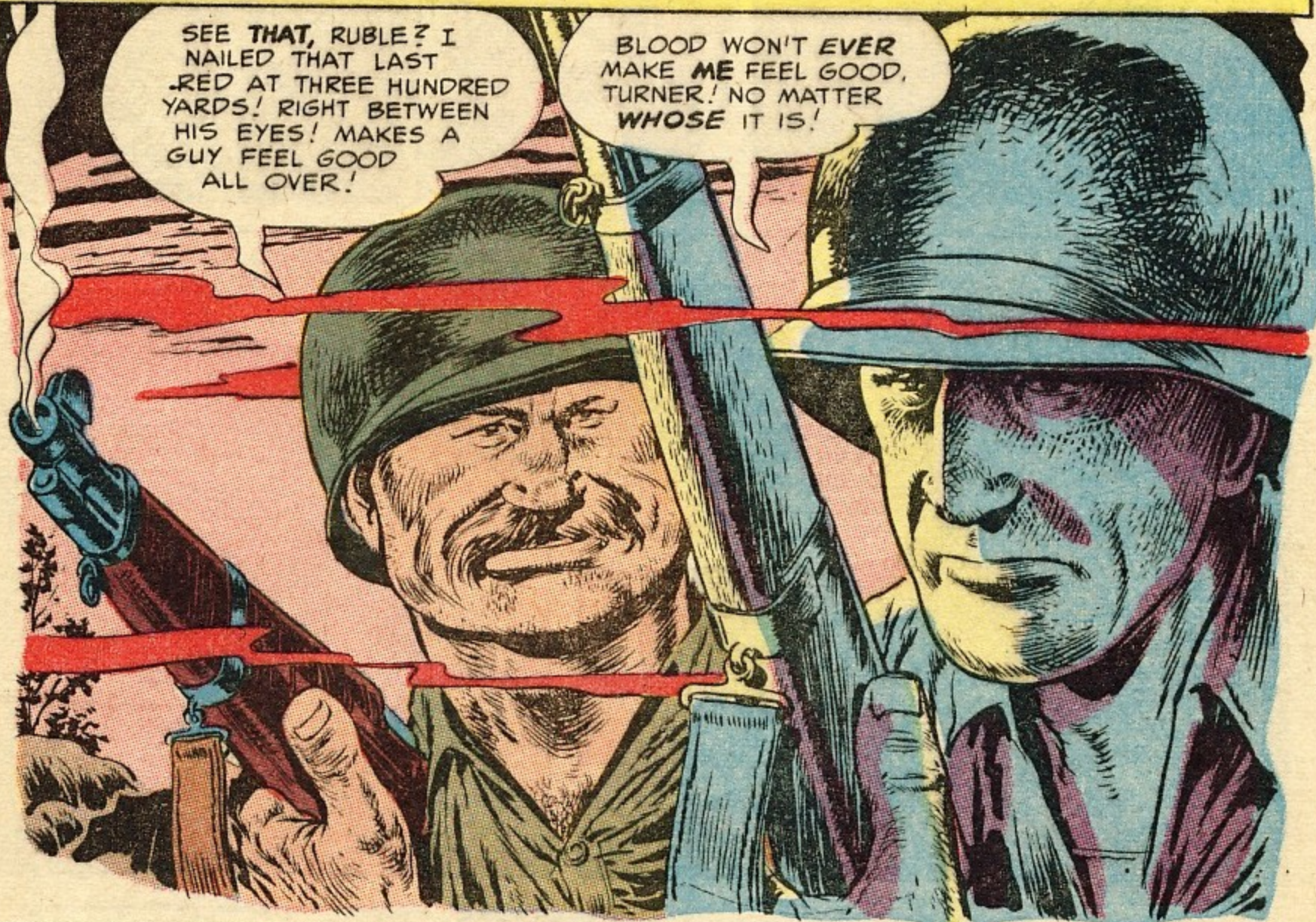




G.I. Joe

IN THE MEEK SOLDIER

LIFE IS BASED ON THE LAW OF SURVIVAL — A LAW WHICH HAS AS MANY VARIATIONS AS LIFE ITSELF! SLADE TURNER HAD HIS IDEAS ABOUT SURVIVAL. AND SO DID HENRY RUBLE. SLADE WAS A BORN HUNTER — AND TO HUNT SUCCESSFULLY, ONE MUST **KILL!** HENRY RUBLE BELIEVED THAT "THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH." NOW WE SEE BOTH MEN IN THEIR FOXHOLE. TURNER FIRES, AND...



SEE THAT, RUBLE? I NAILED THAT LAST RED AT THREE HUNDRED YARDS! RIGHT BETWEEN HIS EYES! MAKES A GUY FEEL GOOD ALL OVER!

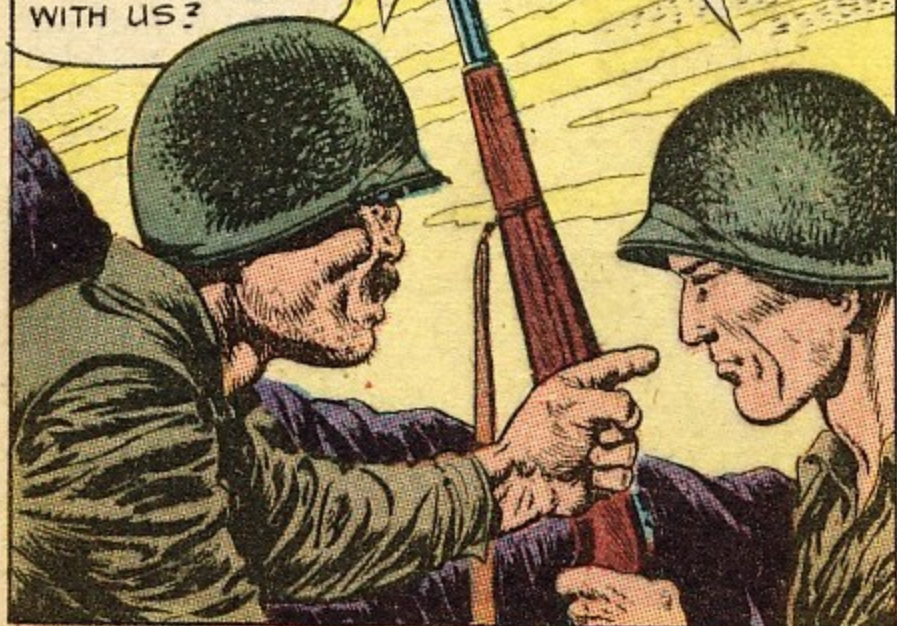
BLOOD WON'T EVER MAKE **ME** FEEL GOOD, TURNER! NO MATTER WHOSE IT IS!

MEBBE YA DON'T KNOW IT, RUBLE — BUT **I BEEN WATCHIN' YA!** YA FIRE THAT RIFLE LIKE IT WAS BEE-BEE SHOT — AN' LIKE YA WAS HOPIN' TO **MISS!** HOW MANY REDS YA KNOCKED OFF SINCE YA BEEN WITH US?

DO YOU KEEP SCORE, SLADE? I DON'T!

YEAH, I KEEP SCORE! AN' HERE'S ONE **MORE** I'M GONNA RING UP BEFORE —

KNOCK IT OFF, TURNER! SAVE THAT KINDA STUFF FER TH' COMMIES!





YOU'D FLATTEN THIS GUY, TOO, SARGE, IF YOU'D BEEN FIGHTIN' NEXT TO 'IM LIKE I BEEN! HE'S FAKIN' WIT' THAT RIFLE!

AWRIGHT, BUTTON IT UP, TURNER! GIT ON BACK AN' CHECK AMMO!



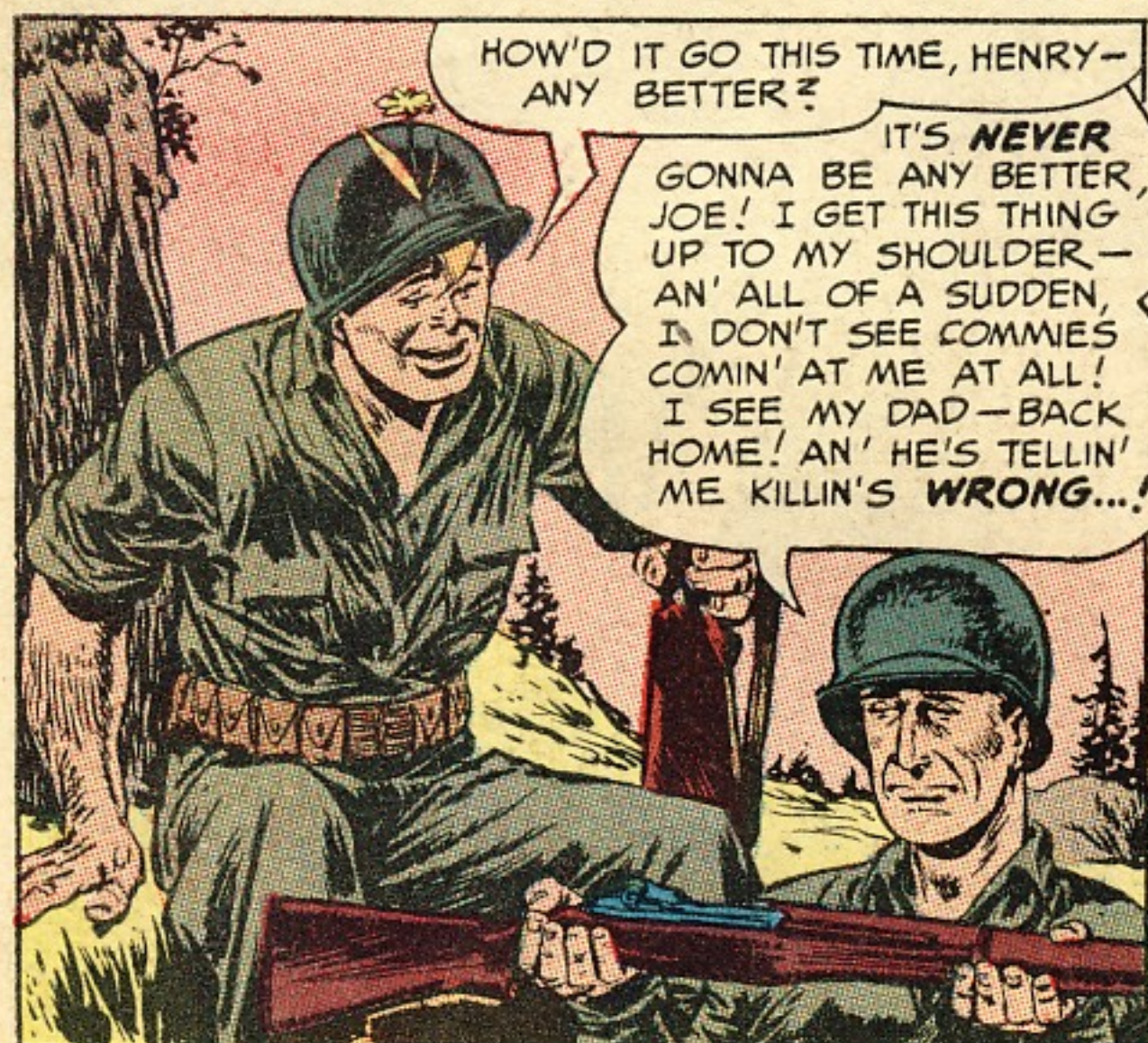
WELL? YA HEAR WHAT TURNER SAID ABOUT YA, RUBLE?

I HEARD HIM, SARGE! NOT MUCH I CAN DO ABOUT WHAT A MAN THINKS-- IS THERE?



YER GONNA HAVE T'DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT WHAT I BEEN THINKIN', RUBLE! AN' **WHAT** I BEEN THINKIN' IS--

HEY, SARGE! THE LOOTENANT WANTS YA!



HOW'D IT GO THIS TIME, HENRY-- ANY BETTER?

IT'S **NEVER** GONNA BE ANY BETTER, JOE! I GET THIS THING UP TO MY SHOULDER-- AN' ALL OF A SUDDEN, I DON'T SEE COMMIES COMIN' AT ME AT ALL! I SEE MY DAD-- BACK HOME! AN' HE'S TELLIN' ME KILLIN'S **WRONG...**!



... LIKE HE'S **ALWAYS** TOLD ME! LIKE HE **BELIEVES**-- AN' LIKE I BELIEVE, TOO!



DON'T LET TURNER GET Y'DOWN, HENRY! HE DON'T MEAN ANY HARM! HE'S BEEN **HUNTIN'** ALL HIS LIFE! TO SLADE, PICKIN' OFF REDS IS LIKE BAGGIN' **MOOSE!** STICK WITH IT! YOU'LL COME THROUGH!

THANKS, JOE! THANKS FOR THE NICE TRY, ANYWAY!

MEANWHILE...



...OKAY, LOOTENANT, SEEIN' AS YOU'RE ASKIN' ME! I GOT NOTHIN' AGAINST 'IM **PERSONAL**-- BUT AS FAR AS SOLDIERIN' GOES, RUBLE'S **DEAD WEIGHT!** GUN-SHY-- **ALL THE WAY THROUGH!**

HE'S NEW TO COMBAT, SERGEANT! TIME MAY DO THE TRICK, BUT AT THE SAME TIME I WANT YOU TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM!

THAT NIGHT...



CAN I TALK TO YA FOR A SECOND, SLADE?

SURE THING, JOE! PULL UP A ROCKER! MAKE YOURSELF T'HOME!

IT'S ABOUT HENRY RUBLE, SLADE! I WAS THINKIN' MAYBE YOU COULD HELP 'IM IF YOU WAS TO TELL 'IM ABOUT HOW Y' WENT **HUNTIN'** ALL THE TIME BACK HOME, AN' --

STACK IT UP, JOE! TH' GUY'S FERFER, TH' BIRDS! I GOT NO TIME FER 'IM!

HE WASN'T BROUGHT UP LIKE YOU 'N' ME, SLADE! HIS DAD'S SORT OF A 'PREACHER!' DON'T BELIEVE **KILLIN'** ANYTHIN' IS RIGHT! HENRY CAN'T HELP WHAT HE'S BEEN TAUGHT!

AN' I AIN'T NO WET-NURSE T'GO AROUND **UNLEARNIN'** 'IM! RUBLE'S BAD NEWS, JOE! FERGET 'IM!

MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY...



GEE, HENRY-- YOU'RE NOT LETTIN' US DOWN! Y'GOTTA QUIT THINKIN' THAT WAY! I WASN'T GOOD FER MUCH EITHER, UNTIL I GOT ME MY FIRST RED! AFTER THAT--

BUT **YOU** GOT 'IM, WEEPY! SOMEHOW, I-- **I CAN'T!** I'M NO GOOD TO MYSELF --OR TO **ANYBODY OUT HERE!**

AND JUST BEFORE DAWN...



YA **STILL** THINK RUBLE OUGHTA GO OUT ON THIS RECON, LOOTENANT? THERE **MIGHT** BE TROUBLE!

HE'LL HAVE **TWO** GOOD MEN WITH HIM, SERGEANT! IT MAY HELP! IF NOT-- WELL, WE'LL HAVE TO KNOW THAT, TOO!

ALL RIGHT, MEN: HERE ARE YOUR **ORDERS!**

LATER, IN ENEMY TERRITORY...



GET **DOWN**, HENRY! Y'GOTTA **KEEP DOWN!**

YA **BLASTED** KNUCKLEHEAD! YA WANTA GET US **ALL KILLED?**



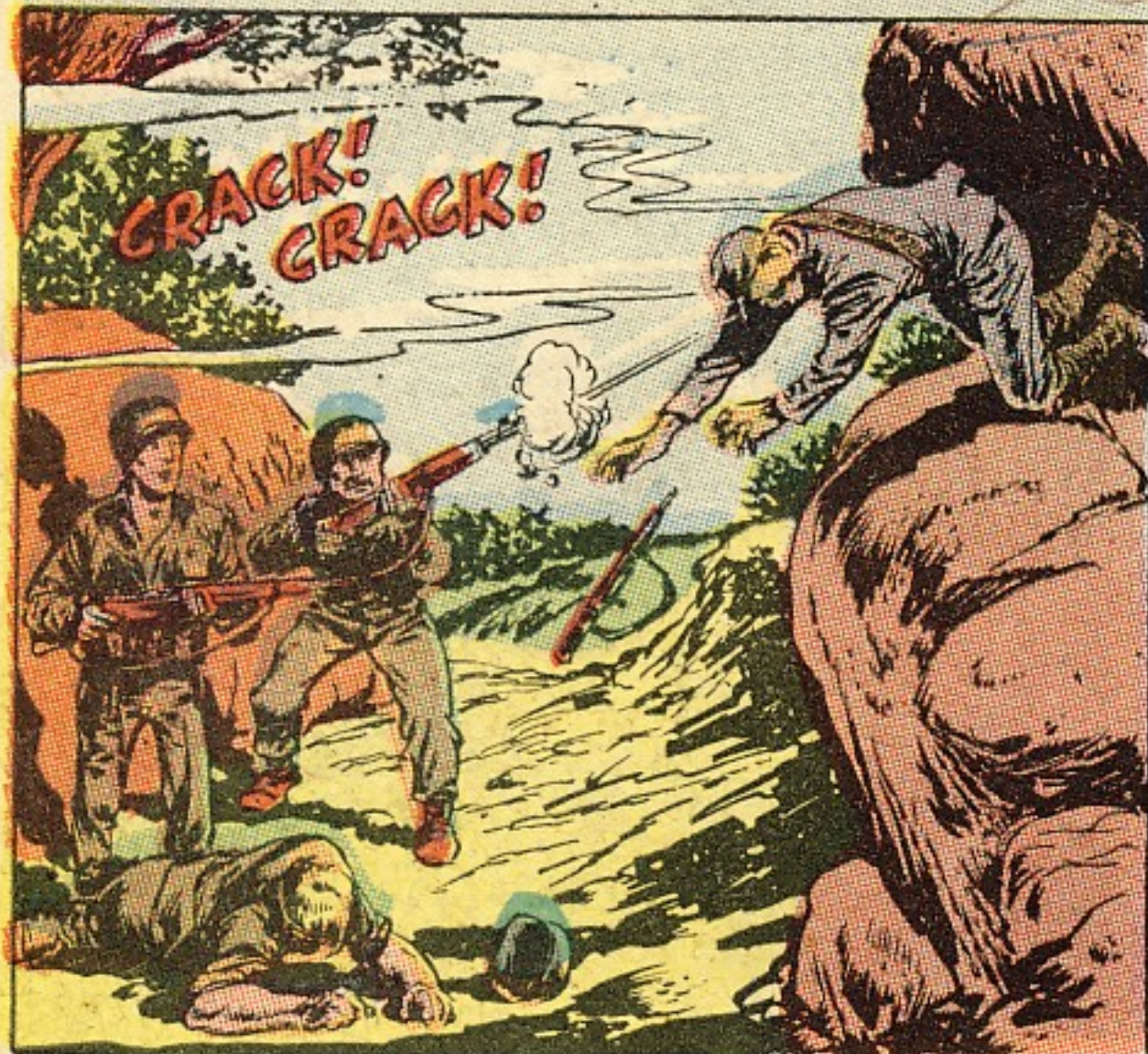


SECONDS LATER...

J-JOE...!



AND AS IF HENRY'S VOICE HAD LIT A DYNAMITE FUSE...



AS THE ECHOING SHOTS DIE AWAY...

HOW BAD IS IT, JOE? LEMME SEE...

NEVER MIND ME, SLADE!

HENRY! GET DOWN! THERE MAY BE MORE OF 'EM!



MOMENTS LATER, WITH JOE HELPED TO THE SHELTER OF A PROTECTING LEDGE...

YA COULDA HAD THAT RED, RUBLE - BUT YA FROZE! IT'S ON ACCOUNTA YOU JOE STOPPED ONE! SO LET'S SEE IF YA CAN STOP THIS, YA CHICKEN-LIVERED...

I AIN'T NO GUN-KILLER LIKE YOU, TURNER - BUT THERE AIN'T A MAN LIVIN' I'M AFRAID OF WITH MY FISTS! SO LET'S YOU 'N' ME --



WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU GUYS? THIS IS ENEMY TERRITORY! WE GOTTA GET OUTA HERE...!



LATER, BACK AT CAMP...



OKAY, BURCH, LET'S HAVE THE REST OF IT! **DID** RUBLE FREEZE LIKE TURNER SAYS?

AW, SARGE — TH' WHOLE THING WAS **OVER** IN A COUPLE OF SECONDS! I'M OKAY — AN' WE **GOT** THE RED!

THERE YOU ARE, BURCH — GOOD AS NEW! IT WAS ONLY A GRAZE!

I'M ASKIN' YA, **DID** RUBLE FREEZE OUT ON THAT RECON?

SERGEANT! ASSEMBLE THE MEN! WE'RE MOVING UP IN 30 MINUTES!



A HALF-HOUR LATER...

... AND WE CAN EXPECT MECHANIZED SUPPORT SOME TIME TOMORROW! MEANWHILE, ORDERS ARE TO MOVE UP AND SECURE! I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU THIS WILL BE HEAVY ACTION! ALL RIGHT — ANY QUESTIONS?



YES, SIR! I WANTA KNOW IF I GOTTA FIGHT ALONGSIDE A GUY WHO **WON'T**!

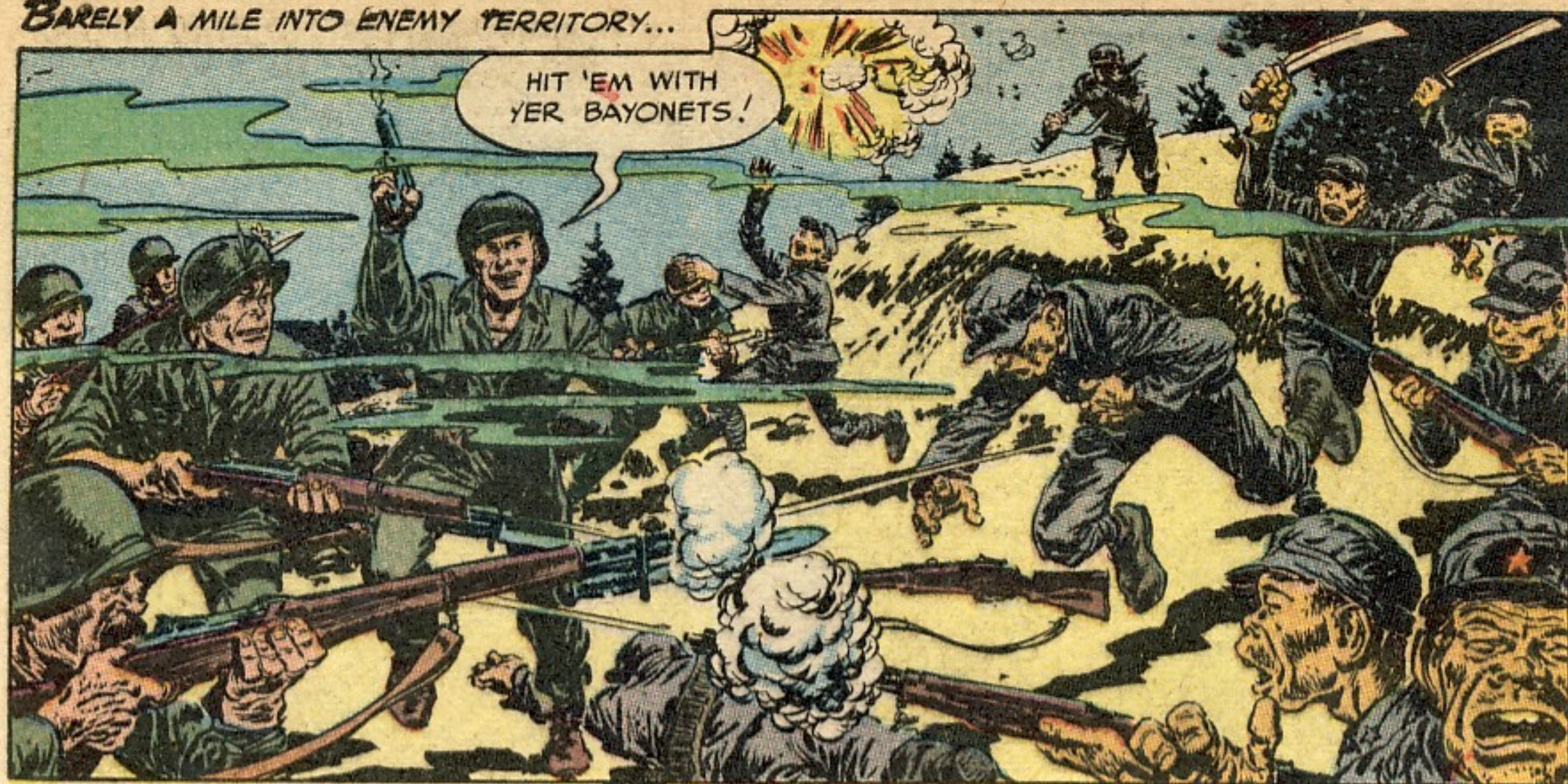


PRIVATE TURNER, WHERE WE'RE HEADING **EVERY** MAN WILL BE ON HIS OWN! **WHO** IS FIGHTING NEXT TO YOU SHOULD BE YOUR CONCERN **ONLY** WHEN YOU CAN HELP HIM — OR IF HE CAN HELP **YOU**! NOW — **FALL IN**!

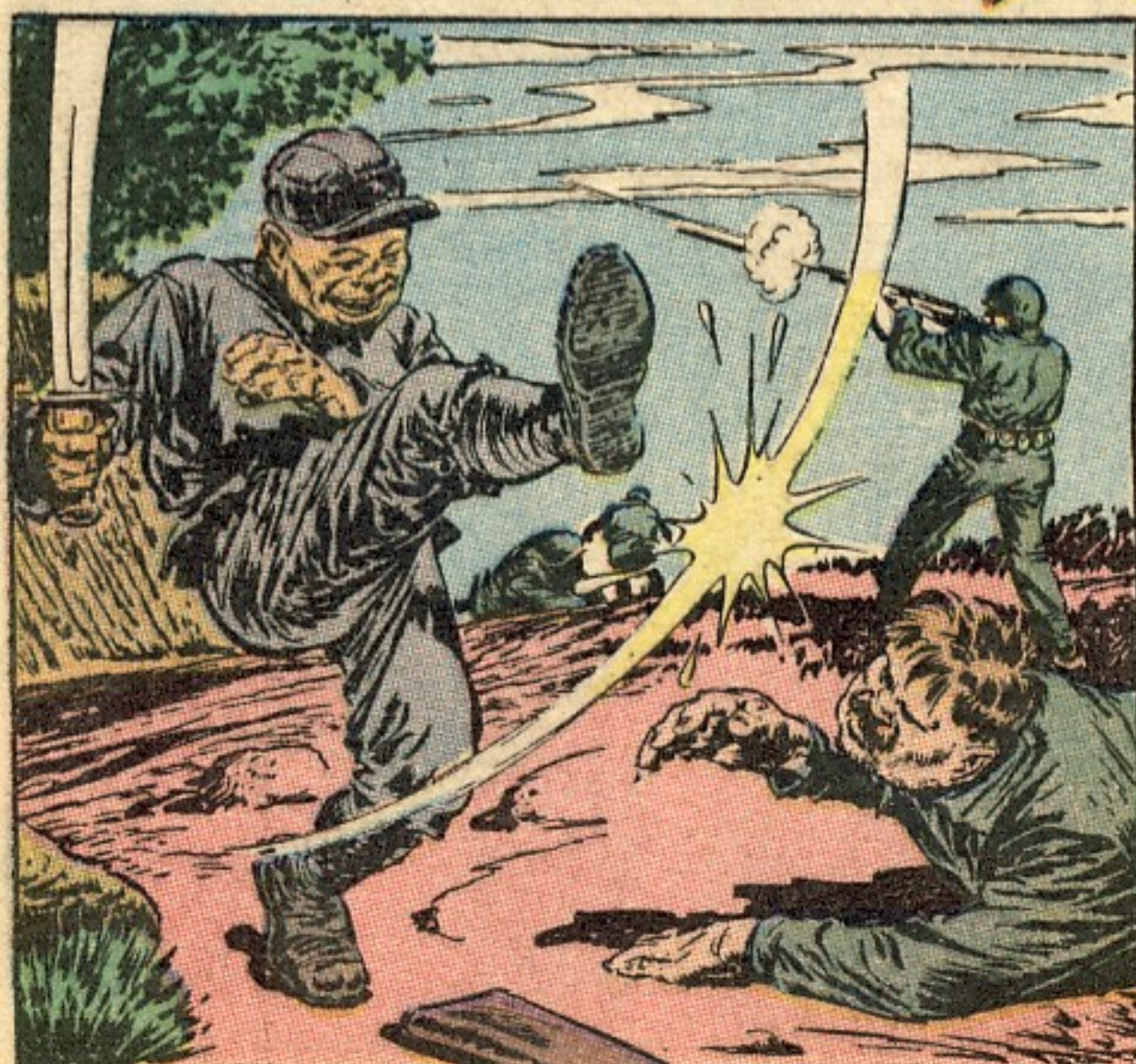


JUS' KEEP OUTA **MY** LINE O' FIRE WHEN Y'GO INTER YER FREEZE, RUBLE! OR SLADE TURNER GETS HIMSELF A KING-SIZE SKUNK — FER **STUFFIN**!

BARELY A MILE INTO ENEMY TERRITORY...

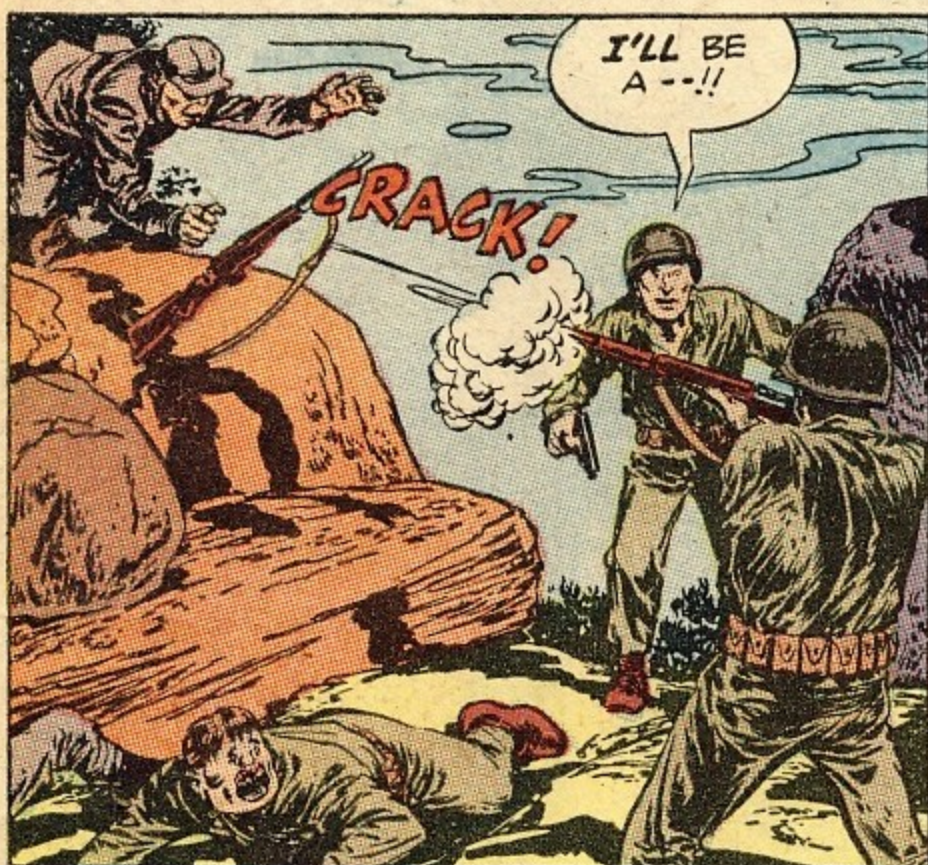


EAR-SPLITTING MINUTES LATER...



AND A FEW YARDS AWAY...





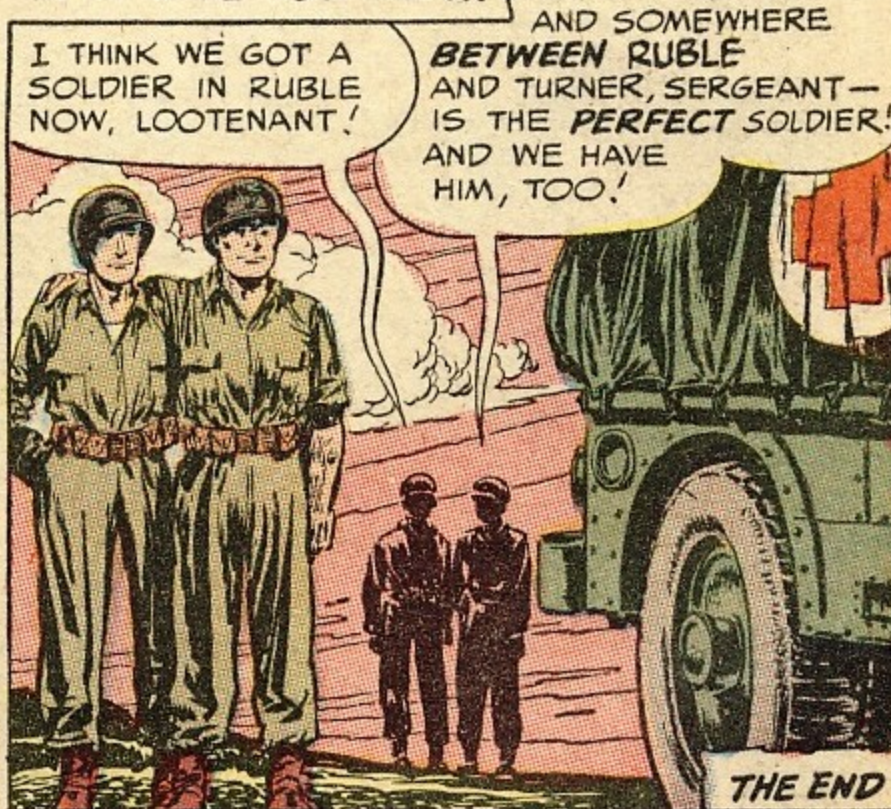
HOURS LATER, THE POSITION FINALLY SECURED...



A FEW MINUTES LATER...



AND AS SLADE TURNER WAS SHIPPED BACK TO A BASE HOSPITAL...



G.I. Joe

in

The BUCK PASSER

"...CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE" HAS ALWAYS HAD A HIGH RATING WITH THE MEN OF "BAKER" COMPANY. WHEN FRANKIE 'SLIM' TRAVERS JOINED THE OUTFIT, IT WAS ONLY A LITTLE TIME BEFORE HE WAS CONCEDED A PARTICULAR CHAMPIONSHIP! HE MIGHT NEVER HAVE ANSWERED TO IT AT ROLL-CALL, BUT EVERYONE ELSE KNEW THAT A SECOND, AND MORE ACCURATE, NAME FOR SLIM WAS...

"THE BUCK PASSER!"



THIS AIN'T NO REST CAMP, TRAVERS, BUT **THIS AREA STAYS POLICED**, UNNERSTAND? NOW, GET THIS TRASH O' YOURS **OUTA** HERE!

DON'T LOOK AT ME, SARGE! **HOOSIER'S** THE LAST ONE I SEEN EATIN' AROUND HERE!

LATER THAT NIGHT...

DOUSE THAT CIGARETTE! WHAT'SA MATTER? Y'INVITIN' THE REDS OVER FER A PICNIC?

AW, WEEPY **NEEDED** THAT DRAG, SARGE! HE WAS FALLIN' ASLEEP!

AND LATER...

IF HE WAS CAUGHT **STABBIN'** SOMEBODY, HE'D TELL YA TH' GUY JUST **HAPPENED** T'RUN INTER THE **KNIFE** HE WAS HOLDIN'!

TAKE IT EASY, SARGE! SLIM'S NOT SO BAD! HERE — TAKE SOME OF THIS! IT'LL COOL YOU OFF!



BACK IN THE LOOKOUT POST...

I DIDN'T HAVE A DRAG OFF YER CIGARETTE, SLIM! WHY'D YOU TELL MULVANEY--?

YA WANT 'IM STANDIN' HERE CHEWIN' US OUT FER THE REST O' TH' NIGHT...?



... RED ARTILLERY SOUNDS PRETTIER'N A SERGEANT'S BELLY-ACHIN' ANYTIME! NOW, PIPE DOWN—AN' DON'T DISTURB ME UNLESS IT'S SOMETHIN' IMPORTANT! I'M POOPED!



THE NEXT MORNING...

WATER! YEE-OW!

SNAP INTO IT, JOE! YER EARS AIN'T BEEN THAT CLEAN SINCE YER MA SANDPAPERED 'EM!

THEY'RE LAPPIN' IT UP LIKE A BUNCH O' GOLDFISH, LOOTENANT! LOOKIT 'EM!

WHAT TH'—

THIS TIME I SEEN YA, TRAVERS! THERE'S AN OIL DRUM BACK THERE FER SLOPS! YOU HEARD ME PLAIN ENOUGH, WHEN I SAID T'USE IT!

SIMMER DOWN, SARGE! CAN I HELP IT IF BURCH BUMPED INTO ME?

KNOCK IT OFF! I'M GETTIN' TO LIKE THE TASTE OF SOAP!



OKAY, LET'S HAVE IT, BURCH! DIDJA KNOCK INTO 'IM OR NOT?

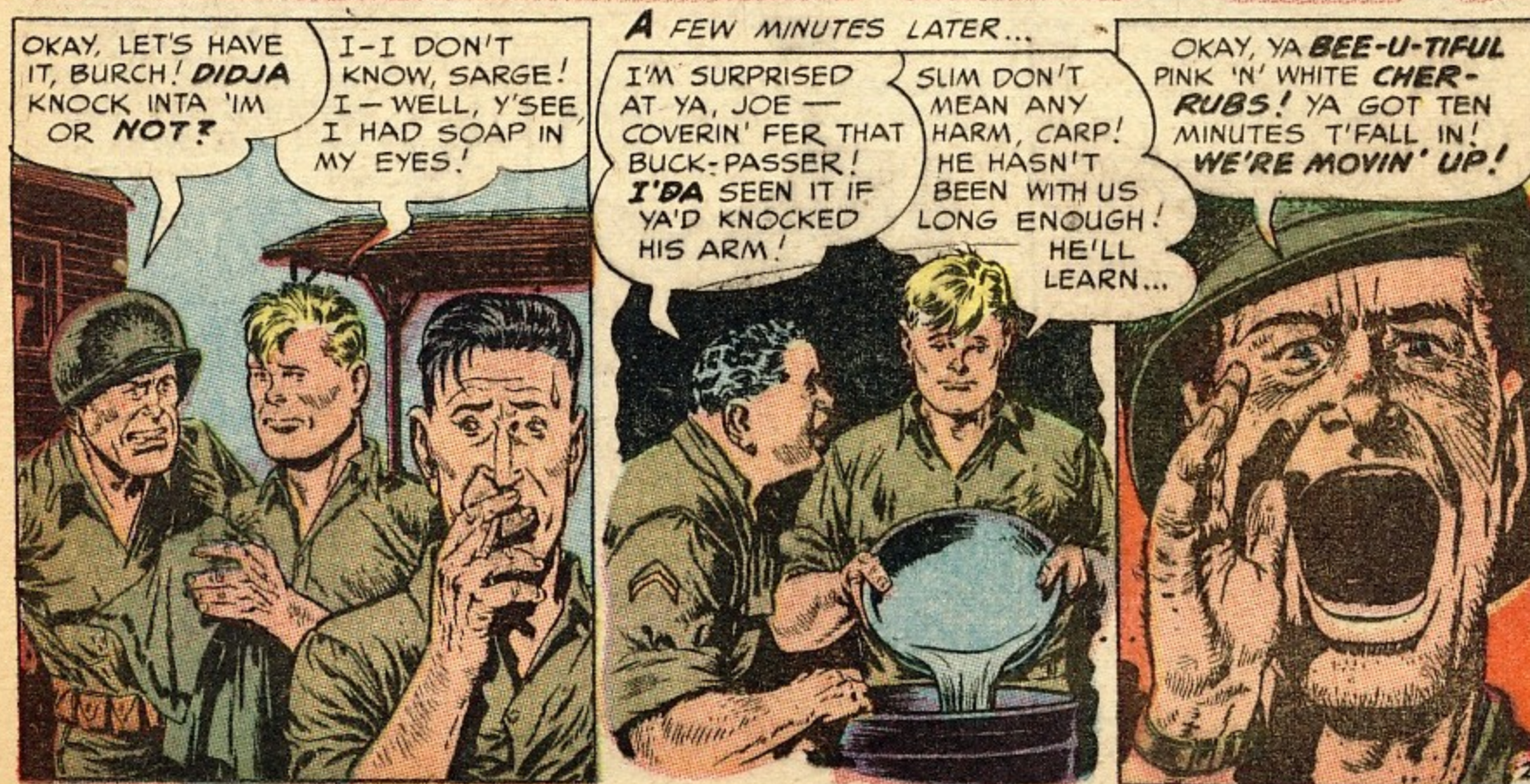
I—I DON'T KNOW, SARGE! I—WELL, Y'SEE, I HAD SOAP IN MY EYES!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

I'M SURPRISED AT YA, JOE—COVERIN' FER THAT BUCK-PASSER! I'DA SEEN IT IF YA'D KNOCKED HIS ARM!

SLIM DON'T MEAN ANY HARM, CARP! HE HASN'T BEEN WITH US LONG ENOUGH! HE'LL LEARN...

OKAY, YA BEE-U-TIFUL PINK 'N' WHITE CHER-RUBS! YA GOT TEN MINUTES T'FALL IN! WE'RE MOVIN' UP!



DEEP IN RED TERRITORY...

THIS IS TREACHEROUS TERRAIN, SERGEANT! ATTACKING HILL 290 IN ANY SORT OF FORMATION IS THE SAME AS SUICIDE! WE'LL HAVE TO DEPLOY—HIT THE HILL FROM THREE DIFFERENT SIDES! SURPRISE IS OUR ONLY HOPE! WE MUST OPERATE ON SPLIT-SECOND TIMING!

YES, SIR!
I'LL TELL
TH' MEN...



...NOW, YA GOT YER INSTRUCTIONS! WE SCATTER AT THE OTHER END O' THIS CANYON! YA HIT OPEN COUNTRY **ONE AT A TIME!** WHEN YA GET MY SIGNAL, YA COME UP WITH EVERYTHIN' YA GOT! ALL CLEAR?

WHY, SARGE! EVERY-
BODY **ALLUS**
UNDERSTANDS
YOU!



THEN SEE TO IT YA DON'T FOUL THINGS UP, TRAVERS!

OKAY—FIX
BAYONETS AN'
GET MOVIN'



KEEP **MOVIN'** YOU GUYS—AN' KEEP **LOW!** UNLESS YA WANT THEM COMMIES MAKIN' CHOP SUEY OUTA YA!

HQ CONFIRMS
THE ATTACK FOR
1100, SIR!

TELL THEM
WE'LL BE
READY!



...NINE... EIGHT...
SEVEN... SIX...
FIVE...

**FIVE
SECONDS,
SIR!**

SERGEANT
MULVANEY
IS ALL SET
FOR THE
SIGNAL!



FIVE SECONDS LATER...

**HIT 'EM, YOU GUYS!
WE'RE TAKIN' THIS
HILL ALL THE
WAY UP!**



[[IN EXPLOSIVE MOMENTS, HILL 290 HAS BECOME A LEAD-SPITTING MONSTER...



BACK ON THE CANYON LEDGE...



BUT THE REDS ON HILL 290 ARE SMART ENOUGH NOT TO SHOW THEMSELVES! AFTER AN HOUR OF FURIOUS FIGHTING...



BUT SUDDENLY...



SOMEONE'S CRAWLING UP TO THAT NEST!



AND THROUGH THE LIEUTENANT'S FIELD GLASSES...



BUT GLUED TO THE SIDE OF HILL 290...



FOR SPINE-CHILLING SECONDS, JOE WATCHES SLIM TRAVERS! THEN...



IN THE CANYON...

TELL HQ THAT "BAKER" COMPANY WILL DIG IN ON HILL 290 TO AWAIT FURTHER ORDERS! IT'S UN.TERRITORY NOW!



MUCH LATER, NEAR THE TOP OF THE BITTERLY CONTESTED HILL...

IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TODAY, TO OBSERVE AN ACT OF PARTICULAR COURAGE! WITH NO THOUGHT OF PERSONAL SAFETY, A "B" COMPANY MAN EXPOSED HIMSELF TO SEVERE ENEMY FIRE, AND DEMOLISHED A RED MACHINE GUN NEST! I WANT YOU ALL TO KNOW WHO THAT MAN IS...
PRIVATE HAWKINS—
STEP FORWARD!





ATTA **BOY**,
HOOSIER!

WHO...
ME?

HUH?

I APPROVE YOUR
MODESTY, PRIVATE
HAWKINS, BUT I
REPEAT... STEP
FORWARD!

AND THE NEXT MORNING...

PLEASE ACCEPT MY
PERSONAL CONGRATU-
LATIONS, PRIVATE! I
CAN PROMISE NOTHING,
BUT I INTEND
MAKING A FURTHER
RECOMMENDATION
ABOUT THIS!

B-B-BUT,
SIR! IT
W-W-WASN'T--

OF ALL TH'
LOUSY
ROTTEN
SWINDLES!

DISMISSED!



WHAT'S TH' MATTER,
SLIM? YOUR RUDDER'S
DRAGGIN'!

GIT LOST,
WILL YA?

A LITTLE LATER...

I SAW YOU WIPE OUT THAT NEST
TODAY, SLIM! I'M NOT TRYIN' TO RUB
IT IN EITHER—BUT A GUY WHO'S
PASSED AS MANY BUCKS AS YOU
HAVE, HAS GOTTA EXPECT TO
GET SHORT-CHANGED AT LEAST
ONCE!

C'MON, CHEER
UP! MEBBE NEXT
TIME YOU'LL
HIT THE
JACKPOT!



I HEARD YA, JOE! I **KNEW**
TH' LOOTENANT WAS SEEIN'
THINGS! I'M GONNA TELL
'IM! I'M --

STAY WHERE
Y'ARE, SOLDIER!



YOU'RE TELLIN' TH' LOOTENANT
NOTHIN', HOOSIER!!

SAY—EITHER O' YOU GUYS
GOT A **BUCK** ON YA? I
PASSED MY **LAST ONE!**

The End

KING OF THE MOUNTAIN

THE dead-tired survivors of "Charley" Company's third platoon blinked at their leader in disbelief.

Sergeant Tomasek, the big guy, who had taken over since Wyman had gotten his on Kayo Ridge, was going berserk!

Without a word of warning, he suddenly smashed his big fists against a shattered tree trunk. And with every sickening thud, he turned the air blue with a stream of cuss words.

Two minutes before, the third platoon had been all but blown off the ridge in the face of overwhelming odds, and had retreated to the shelf below.

Now, it was the enemy who bossed the heights while the weary G.I.'s awaited reinforcements. The division CP had just sent a message along that two regiments were moving up through the valley below.

"Lousy Reds!" thundered Tomasek. "They can't push us off the hill. We're going back up where we belong!"

The half-dozen hollow-eyed survivors broke out in a chorus of protests.

"Hold your cork, Tomasek," growled Shultz. "We ain't got a chance of daisies in a whirlwind up there—not until we pick up support."

All at once the flailing and the oaths ceased.

Tomasek whirled on his men, breathing heavily. His eyes beheld them as though they were insects.

"You guys listen to me," he said finally. "Listen to me, because I'm platoon boss and I'm giving the orders."

The men fell silent. There was nothing to do but listen.

"When I was a grammar school kid," Tomasek said, "we played a game called 'King of the Mountain'—and I was always King. Ever since then I've been on the winning side, because I don't like to be pushed around."

He paused to let his quiet oratory sink in. The occasional thud of Communist mortar fire in the valley below, and the Yank artillery on the far side of the hill punctuated Tomasek's speech.

"I guess you guys know which platoon is going back up to take over that ridge," Tomasek continued. "We're not waiting for any reinforcements, because Tomasek is king of the mountain. And Tomasek has no intention of getting the losing habit now."

The men of the third platoon stirred uneasily.

"It's suicide, Tomasek," growled Coles, the BAR man. "We wouldn't last ten seconds."

Tomasek's battered right hand moved inside his jacket. He pulled out a white flag that had crude lettering painted on it. The lettering read: "Third Platoon." The men looked at each other and then at Tomasek, who now had a funny, faraway smile on his face.

"Boys," he said quietly, "we're going back up and show those Reds who's king of the mountain. We're planting the flag on the ridge!"

There was a moment's silence.

Then it was Coles again who spoke up.

"You're nuts, Tomasek! Nuttier than a fruit-cake! We've got divisional reinforcements coming up. *That's* when we move!"

Tomasek drove a stinging backhand slap across Coles' mouth, drawing a trickle of crimson.

"On your feet, Third Platoon," he snarled. "We're moving up!"

* * *

As they crawled up the slope in the dark they could hear the voices of the Reds on the ridge. The Commies wouldn't be expecting a counter-attack until dawn, at the earliest. They had reason to know that divisional reinforcements had been stalled by a MIG strafing attack down in the valley.

Tomasek had it all figured out. They would fan

out and start lobbing grenades. When the enemy opened up, Coles would lead the way through the center of their line with the automatic rifle.

"We're going to make 'em think the whole division's moving up," snapped Tomasek. "They'll be off that ridge before they even know what's hit 'em. Tomasek's going to show 'em how to play king of the mountain!"

An ominous quiet had settled over the hilltop. The big artillery in the valley had stopped probing the night. And the mortar gunners up on the hill must have been grabbing a coffee or whatever it was that kept them going on the night shift.

Coles looked at Shultz and shook his head slowly.

"Only us chickens going to roost," he murmured.

"And Tomasek going after the Congressional Medal," grunted Shultz.

They were up at the shale line now, out of the timber. Fifty feet above them, a couple of hundred Chinese rested on their firepower and waited.

"What a surprise they're going to get," chuckled Tomasek hoarsely. The men of the third platoon shuddered.

Then Tomasek raised his right hand, and they stepped into their assignments.

Back went a half-dozen right arms, and up through the night soared a half-dozen grenades. In the next instant the ridge was rocked with sound.

Cries of anguish and alarm rent the night as the concussion followed. Coles rose upright with his BAR and charged the center of the ridge line, blazing away with all the firepower he could muster. On his flanks, the rest of the third platoon opened up with everything they had.

Ames, Swanson, Neff and Bonneau moved in on the ridge in a fast-closing maneuver. Shultz and Coles, flanking Tomasek, set their teeth and charged upward.

The enemy guns answered back. Three machine guns threw a wicked crossfire down the slope. A star shell lit up the whole slope as they hit the dirt. Tomasek was first on his feet. He roared:

"Up and at 'em, Third Platoon!"

Swanson and Bonneau were the first to fall. They hit the ground face down from opposite flanks. Then it was Coles who got it, with two machine guns working him over fore and aft.

Even before Coles had hit the ground, Tomasek had snatched up the automatic weapon and returned the fire.

A grenade exploded on the left side of the charge, and that was the last Tomasek saw of Ames and Neff. But he moved ahead doggedly now. He could hear the frantic cries up on the ridge—cries that preceded a rout.

Up the final fifty yards Tomasek charged with the BAR blazing. The flag was still pressed against his chest inside the jacket. He was going to plant that flag in a matter of seconds now!

Up on the ridge, the enemy pulled out in blind panic. Tomasek looked around for an instant and swallowed hard. Now, there was just Shultz and himself.

"Let's go, Shultz, just ten yards—"

Shultz was not around to hear Tomasek. He disintegrated in a grenade burst.

Too bad, Tomasek told himself. Nobody was left to see Sgt. Andy Tomasek become 'King of the Mountain.'

He scanned the darkness and strained his ears. The enemy had retreated down the slope on the other side. He picked up a Chinese rifle and jammed the barrel into the shale at the ridge. And then with a grunt of satisfaction he attached the platoon flag to the upright stock.

As the breeze whipped the flag, Tomasek shook his big fist in the direction of the enemy, and thundered:

"Come and get it, Reds! Tomasek's king of—"

A single rifle shot cut the sergeant's speech short.

A momentary look of surprise came over his features.

And then, with a hole in the center of his forehead, he twisted and pitched down the platoon's slope.

* * *

"Get a load of the platoon flag," grunted the medic as he puffed to the summit of the ridge. "Must've been a real glory boy in this outfit."

"Yeah," the second medic said. "But if it wasn't for the 'glory boy,' whoever he was, the division'd never have taken this hill. He sure saved a lot of lives."

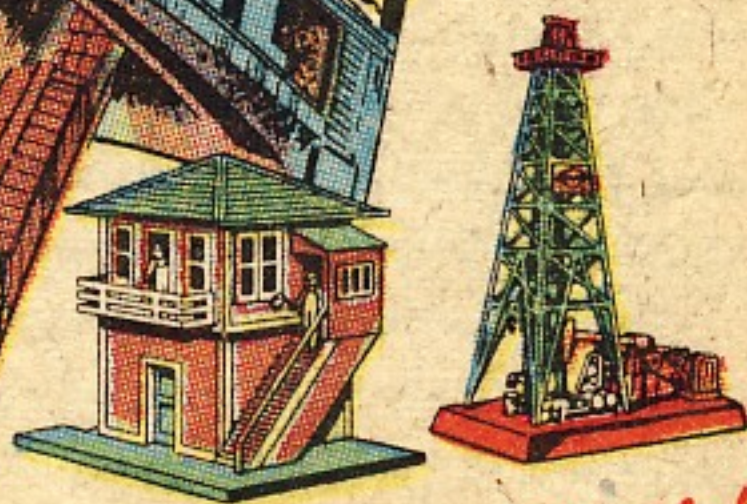
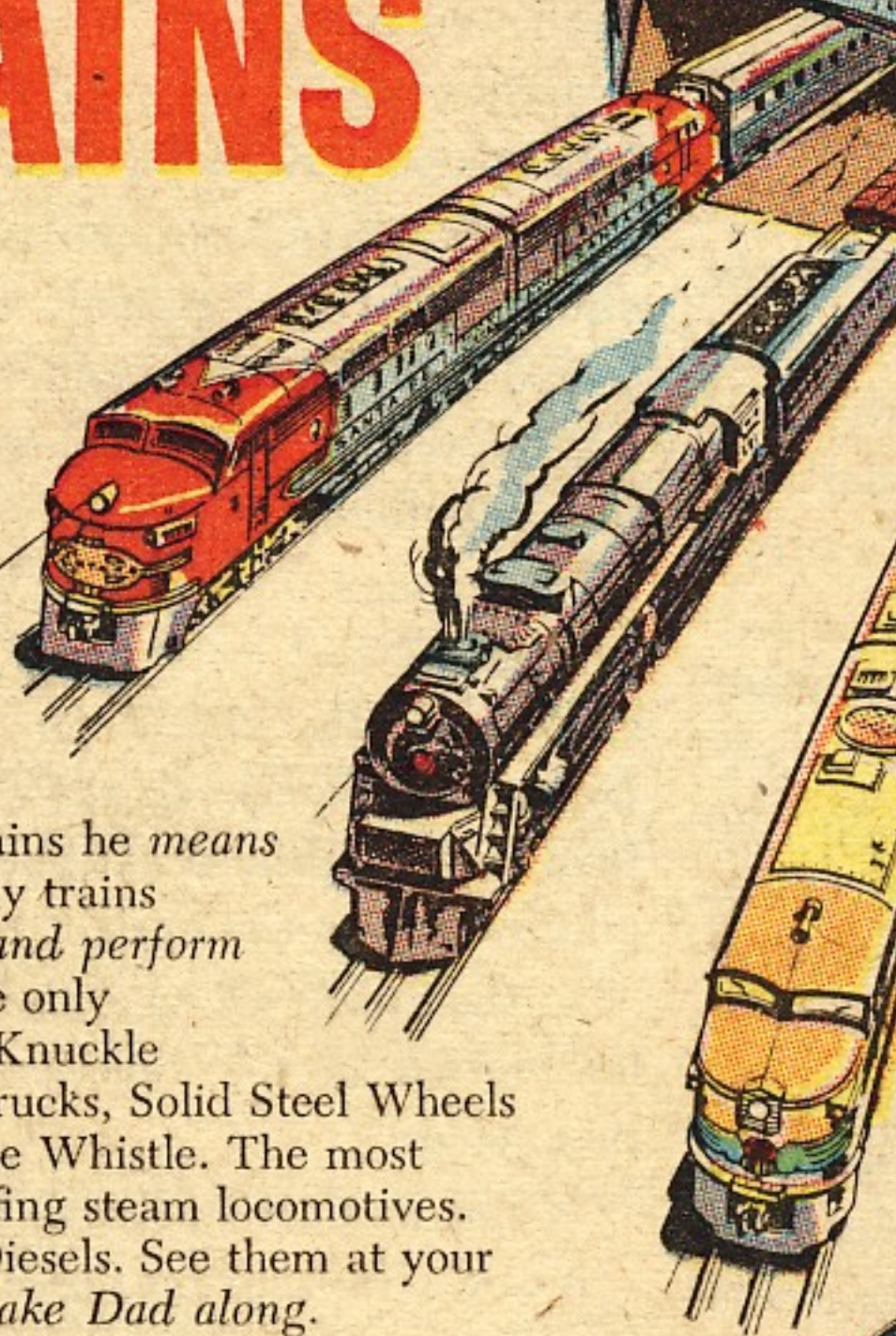
THE END

Boys, Get That Real R.R. Engineer's Thrill

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WITH

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OFFERS
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ONE**



BUDDIES

in

POSSUM PAYS OFF

SOME ANIMALS ARE BORN WITH PROTECTIVE COLORATION — OTHERS, IN MOMENTS OF DANGER, ASSUME ONE. SID ROTHBLATT'S PAL "SKI" WASN'T SURE WHICH WOULD BE BEST, UNTIL HE, "BAKER" COMPANY AND, ESPECIALLY, SGT. HENSHAW LEARNED THAT OCCASIONALLY ... "POSSUM PAYS OFF!"



GOSH, SID, THAT WAS A GREAT STORY! NOW LET'S HAVE TH' ONE ABOUT TH' GUY WOT MADE LIKE A POSSUM!

THAT'S QUITE A STORY, TOO, SKI! AND ONE EVERYBODY CAN LEARN SOMETHING FROM!

THIS IS *TOO MUCH!* SITTING HERE LISTENIN' T' ONE STORY AFTER ANOTHER! AN' NOW SKI WANTS T' HEAR ONE ABOUT A *POSSUM!*

BUT, *SARGE*— NOBODY TELLS STORIES LIKE SID! A GUY CAN LEARN A LOT FROM 'EM!

THERE WAS A KID SAVED HIS OWN LIFE ONCE BY REMEMBERING A STORY, *SARGE*!

A STORY SAVES A GUY'S LIFE? Y' MUST BE NUTS! I'M GONNA HIT TH' SACK!

TH' *SARGE* DON'T UNDERSTAND, SID! C'MON, LET'S HAVE TH' ONE ABOUT TH' POSSUM! I LIKE THAT ONE!

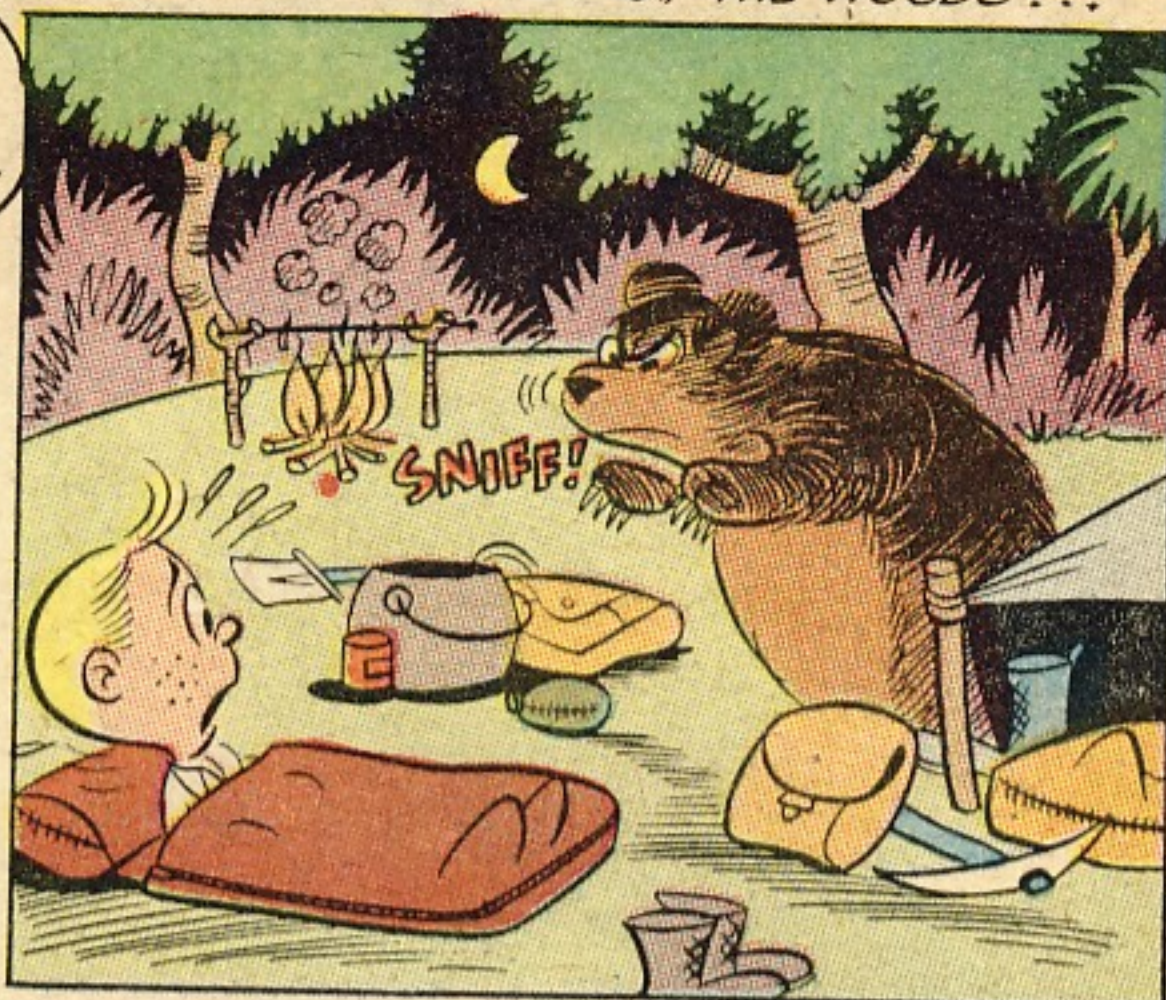
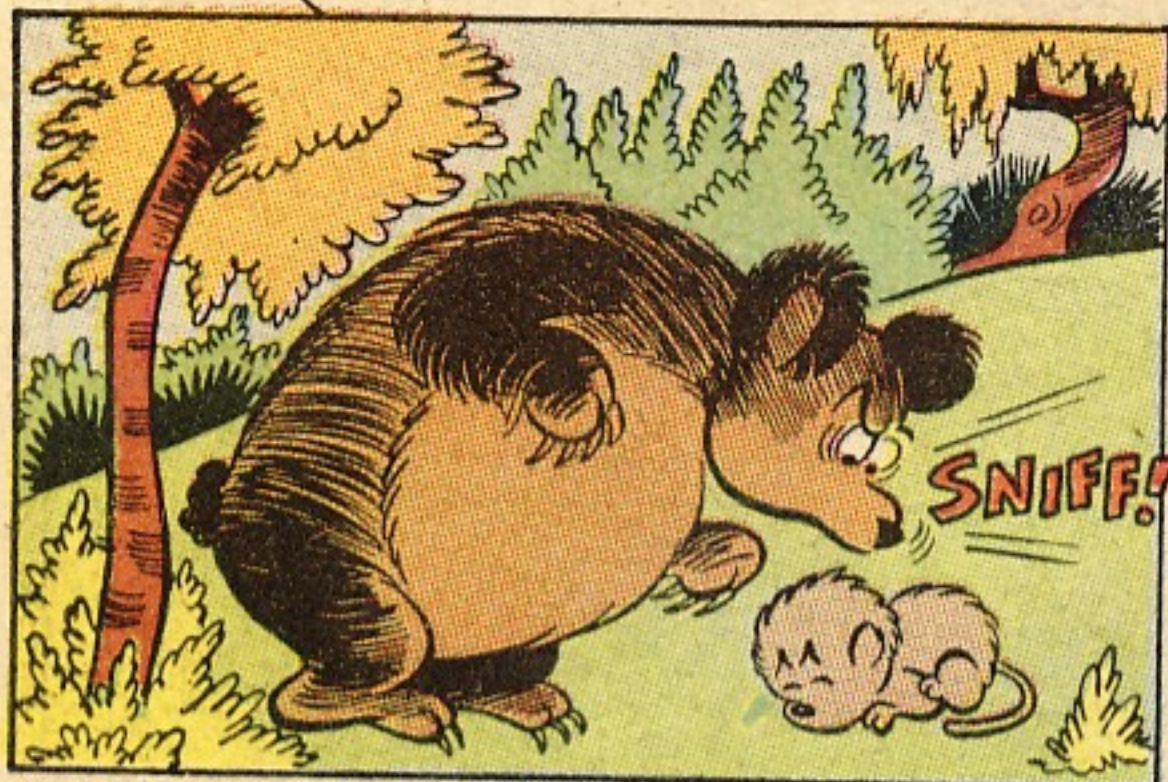
SURE, SKI... WELL, A LONG TIME AGO THERE WAS A LITTLE BOY NAMED TED! HE'D HEARD THE EXPRESSION "PLAYING POSSUM" AND HE ASKED HIS FATHER WHAT IT MEANT. HE WONDERED IF IT WAS A NEW KIND OF GAME...





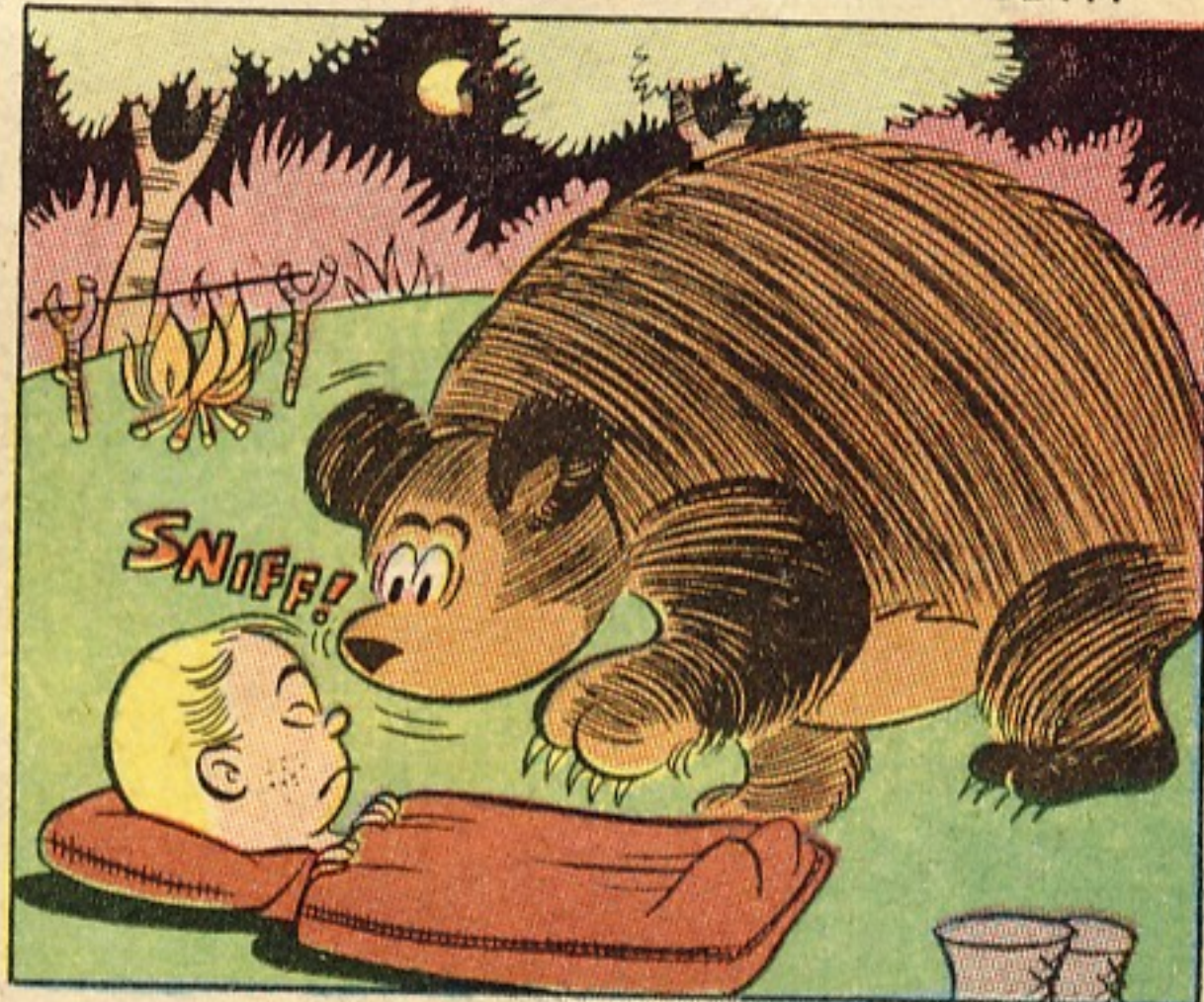
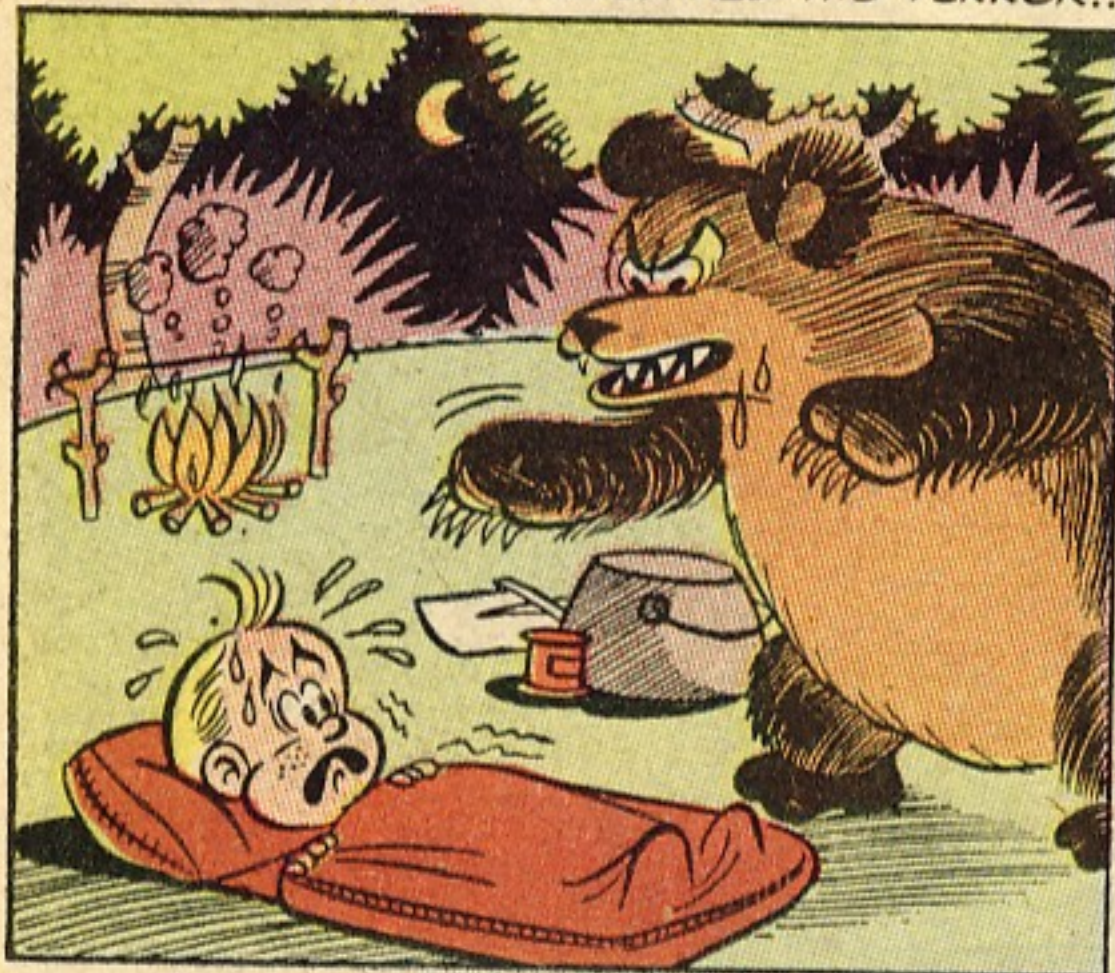
...TED'S FATHER SAID NO, IT WASN'T A GAME REALLY—IT MEANT TO **FOOL** SOMEBODY: AND THEN HE TOLD TED HOW—WHEN THE POSSUM WAS IN DANGER—HE WOULD CURL UP AND "PLAY DEAD" UNTIL THE DANGER WOULD PASS...

"...WELL, LITTLE TED LISTENED TO WHAT HIS FATHER TOLD HIM. THEN ONE NIGHT, WHEN THEY WERE ON A CAMPING TRIP TOGETHER, A HUGE BEAR CAME OUT OF THE WOODS..."

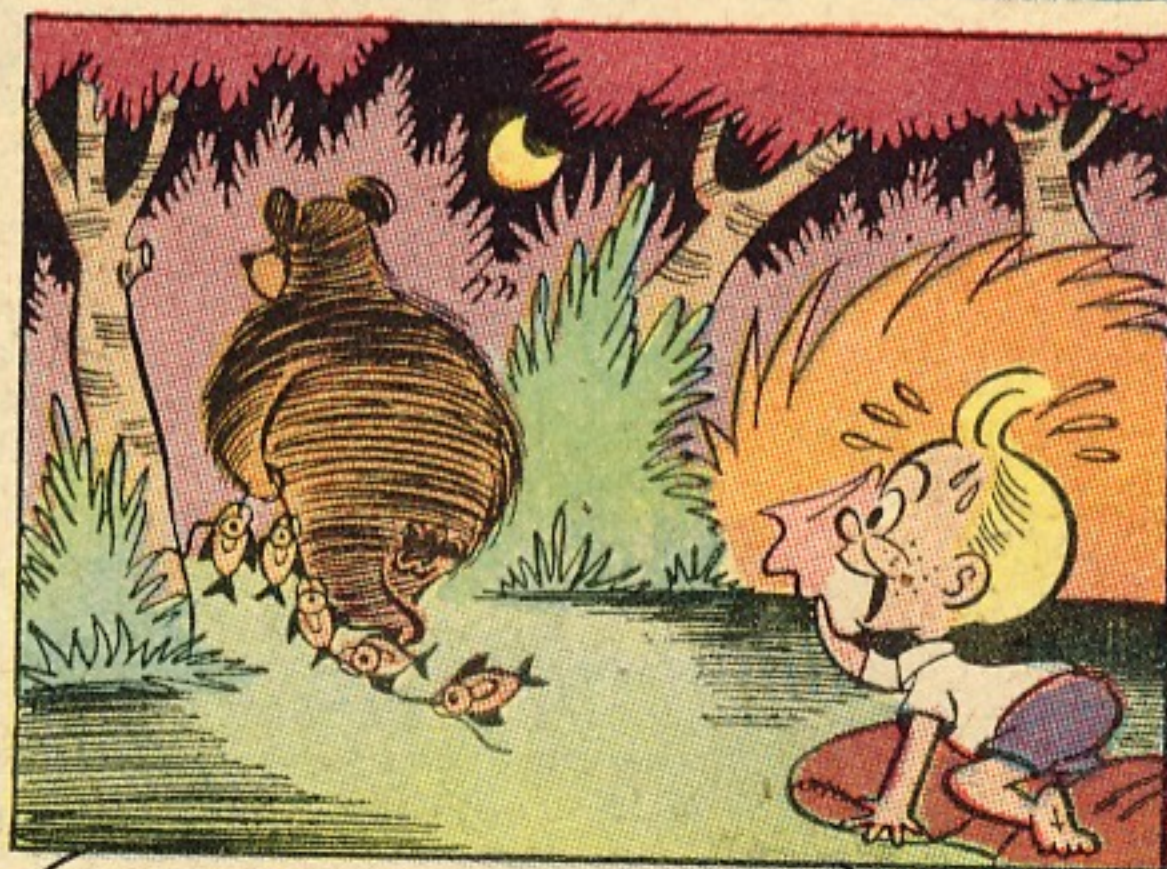
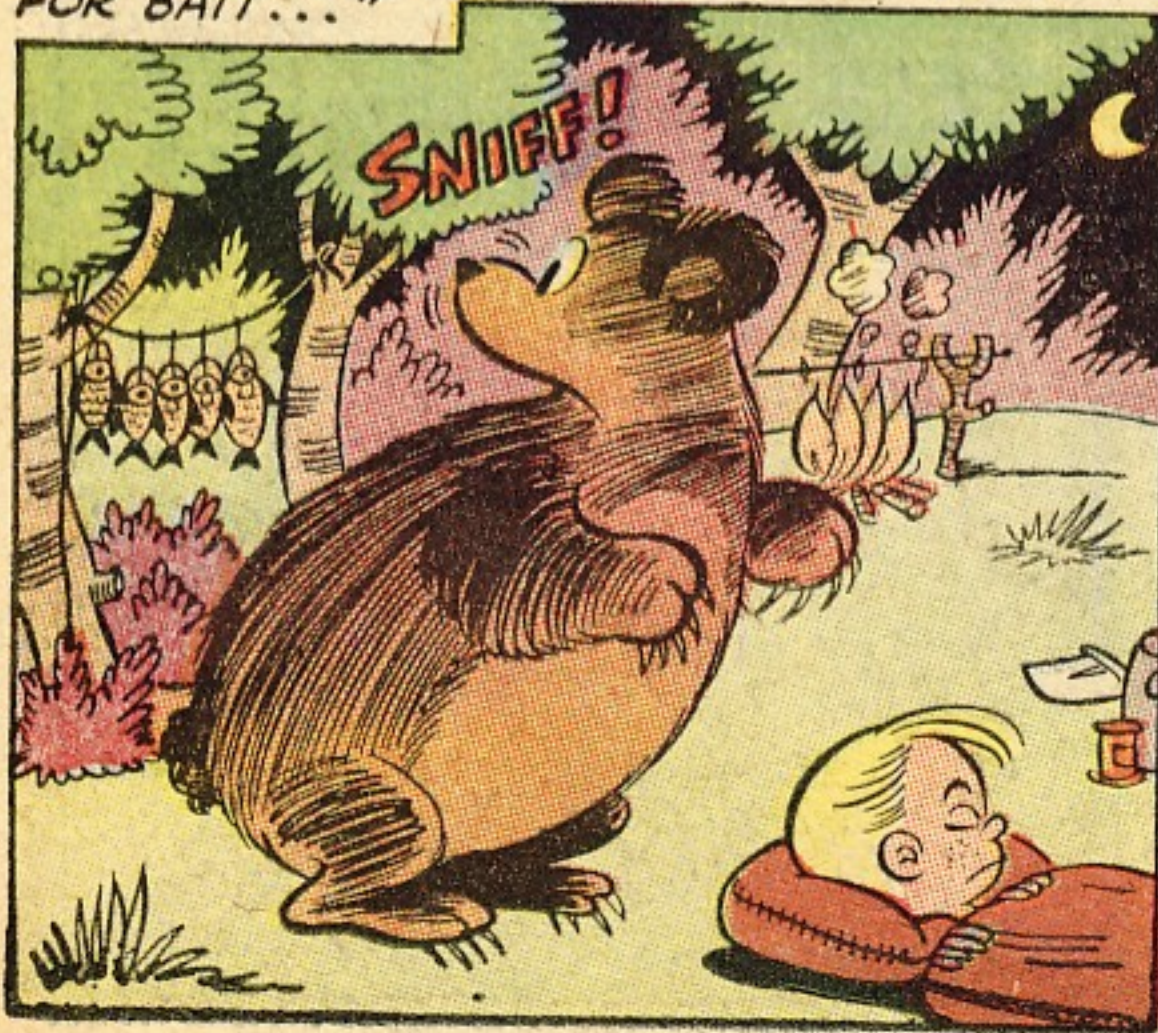


"...THE BEAR SNIFFED AROUND, THEN SPOTTED TED AND LUMBERED OVER TO HIM, FANGS BARED FOR THE ATTACK. LITTLE TED NEARLY SCREAMED HIS TERROR..."

"...BUT THAT WAS WHEN HE REMEMBERED WHAT HIS FATHER HAD SAID ABOUT THE POSSUM-- AND HE LAY PERFECTLY STILL..."



"...SUDDENLY, THE CONFUSED BEAR SNIFFED AGAIN, AND WAS DISTRACTED BY A STRING OF SMALL FISH THAT WAS TO BE USED FOR BAIT..."



...AND FORGETTING TED, THE BEAR SNATCHED UP THE FISH AND DISAPPEARED INTO THE WOODS, LEAVING BEHIND A VERY HAPPY LITTLE BOY!





ROTHBLATT'S OUT
COLD! WE GOTTA
PULL OVER TO
OUR LEFT!

SALLY-LOU'S
CONKED OUT!
TH' REDS'LL BE
ABLE T' FLANK US!



AS "B" COMPANY REPOSITIONS...

YOU'RE NUTS, SKI! WE'RE
TRAPPED AN' YOU'RE
DRAGGIN' THAT NO-GOOD
GUN AROUND!

ROTHBLATT'D
NEVER FORGIVE
ME IF I LET TH'
REDS GIT HOLD
O' SALLY-LOU!



SARGE! THE LOOTENANT
STOPPED ONE IN TH' ARM!
HE'S GONNA BE OKAY,
THOUGH— AN' SAYS
T'HOLD AT ANY
COST!

TELL TH' LOOTENANT
WE'LL HOLD IF WE
HAFTA FIGHT WITH
OUR BARE
HANDS!



THEY GOT US
PRACTICALLY
SURROUNDED!
WE GOTTA
BREAK THROUGH
SOMEHOW!

LET ME TRY
FOR IT,
SARGE!
SKI'S LEG'S
NOT SO
GOOD, BUT
I'M OKAY
NOW!

YOU'RE
STILL
GROGGY, KID!
BESIDES,
WHO COULD
BUCK THAT
RED MACHINE-
GUN?



IF WE COULD KNOCK OUT THAT
RED NEST, WE'D BE IN TH'
CLEAR— BUT THAT'D BE
SUICIDE!



SARGE, IF YOU'LL
DISTRACT THE
REDS WITH FIRE,
I'LL SNEAK IN ON
THEIR RIGHT AND
GRENADE
'EM OUT!

YA WOULDN'T
STAND A
CHANCE!
WAIT TILL
TONIGHT—
IF WE CAN
HOLD OUT
THAT LONG!



SARGE!
SKI'S GONE!





IF THOSE REDS SPOT
ME, IT'S TH' END O'
LI'L SKI!



IF TH' GUNS ARE STILL WORKING—
WE'RE IN BUSINESS....!



BRO-THER !!! A GANG O'
REDS HEADIN' RIGHT FER
THIS TANK!



EXCELL-ENT!!! AMEL-ICAN TANK!!! WE
CAN USE— AH! DEAD G.I.! MAYBE
FIND MONEY ON BODY!



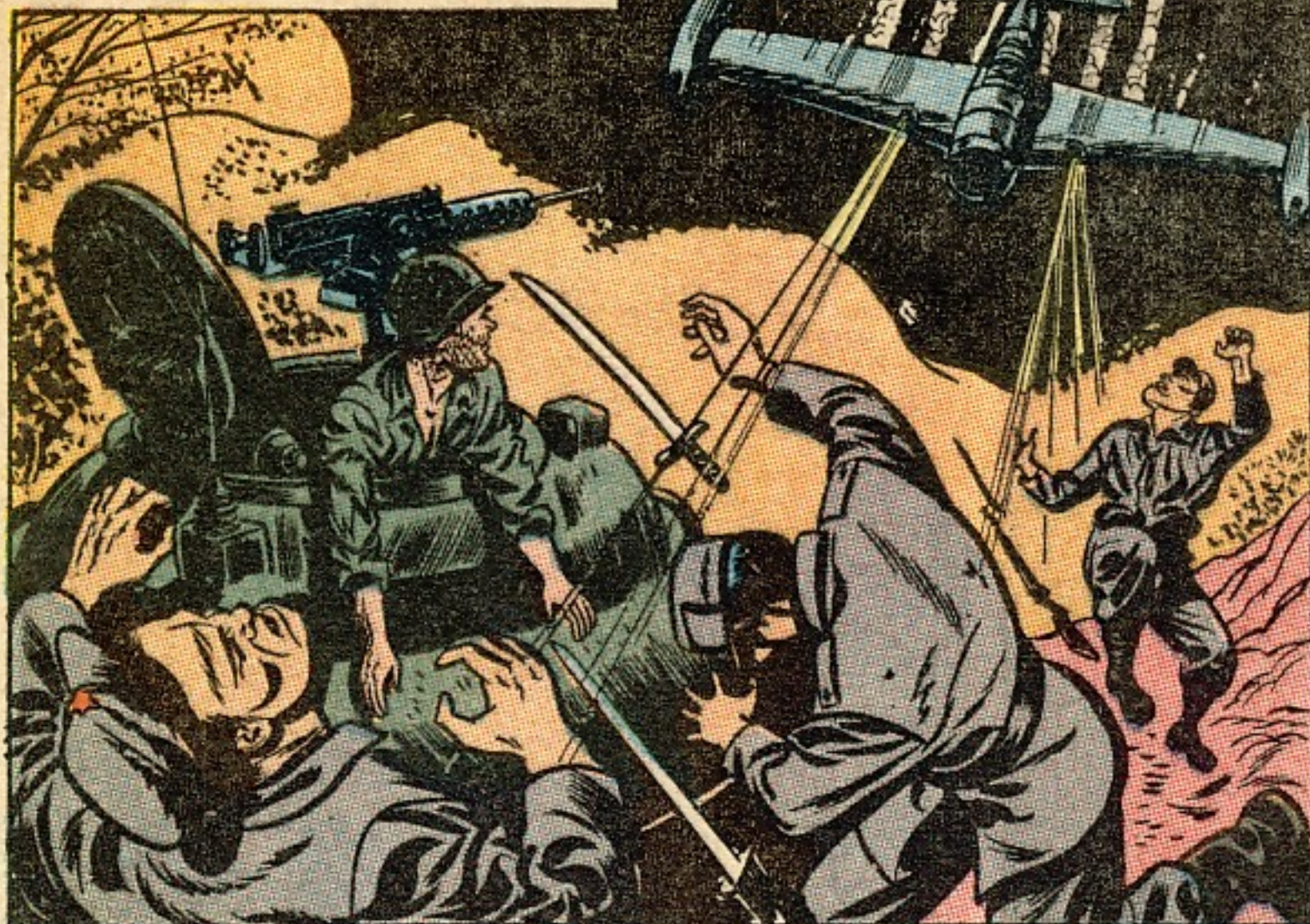
YANKEE FLESH
VELLY WEAK—
LIKE ALL
YANKS!

SOMETHING VELLY
STRANGE HERE!



THAT SOLDIER WEAR
INSIGNIA OF INFANTRY—
NOT ARMORED! MAKE
SURE NO MISTAKE! WILL
REMOVE YANKEE
HEAD....!

SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE SKY...

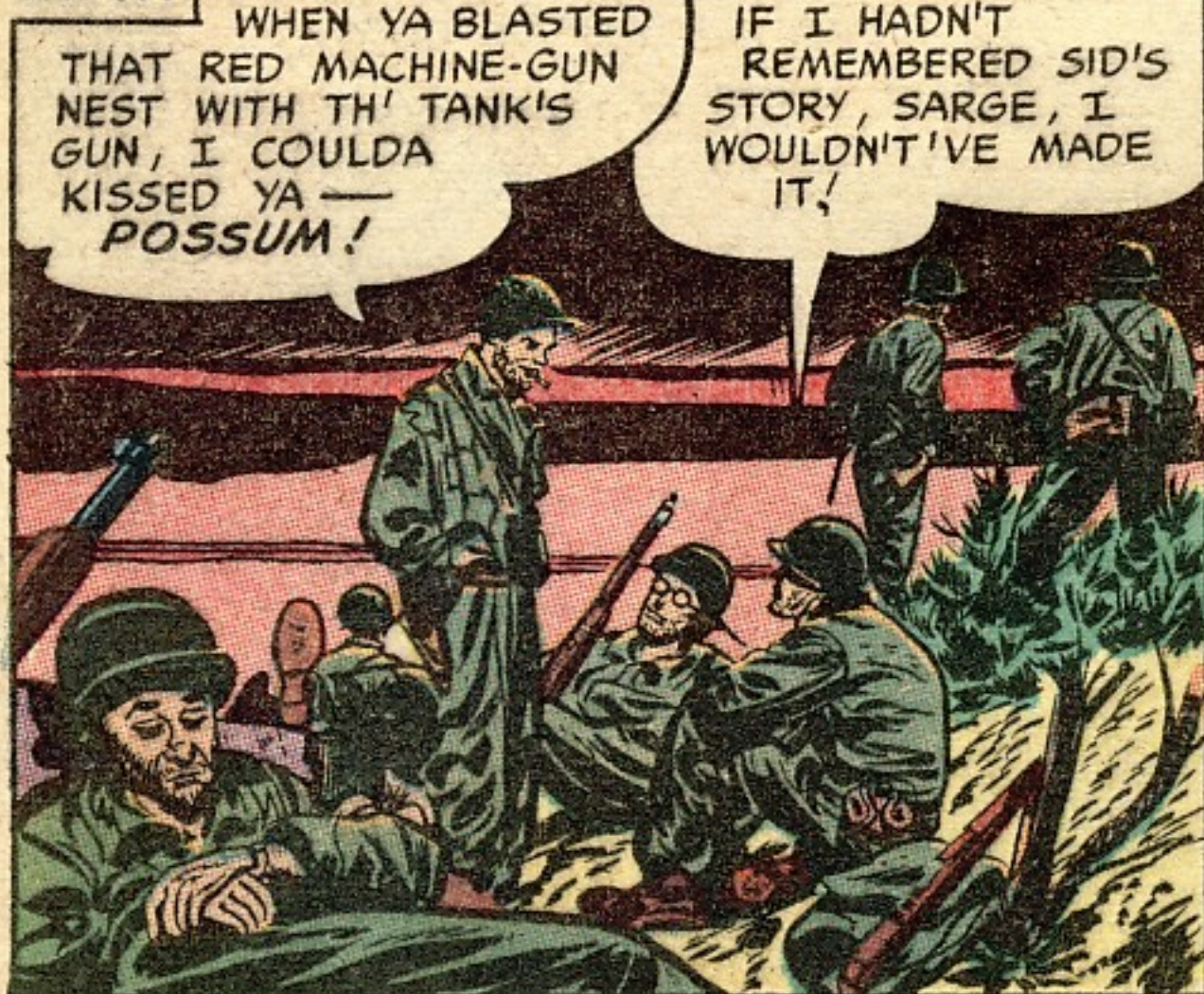


AND A RAGE-CRAZED SKI LEAPS FOR THE TANK'S GUN...



AN' NOW
FER YER
LOUSY
MACHINE-
GUN NEST!

LATER, AS A BLOOD-RED SUN SINKS IN THE KOREAN SKY...



WHEN YA BLASTED
THAT RED MACHINE-GUN
NEST WITH TH' TANK'S
GUN, I COULDA
KISSED YA —
POSSUM!

IF I HADN'T
REMEMBERED SID'S
STORY, SARGE, I
WOULDN'T'VE MADE
IT!

IF I'DA HAD **SALLY-LOU**,
I COULDA WIPED OUT TH'
WHOLE RED ARMY! I'M
SURE GONNA MISS THAT
SWEET LI'L GUN!

HEY—THAT
REMINDS
ME...



DOOLIN FIXED 'ER UP,
SKI! SHE'S GONNA
BE FINE! SHE'S
JUST RESTIN' NOW!!

GOOD OL'
SALLY-LOU!

WAIT'LL WE
GET HER BACK
IN ACTION! TH'
COMMIES BETTER
WATCH OUT!

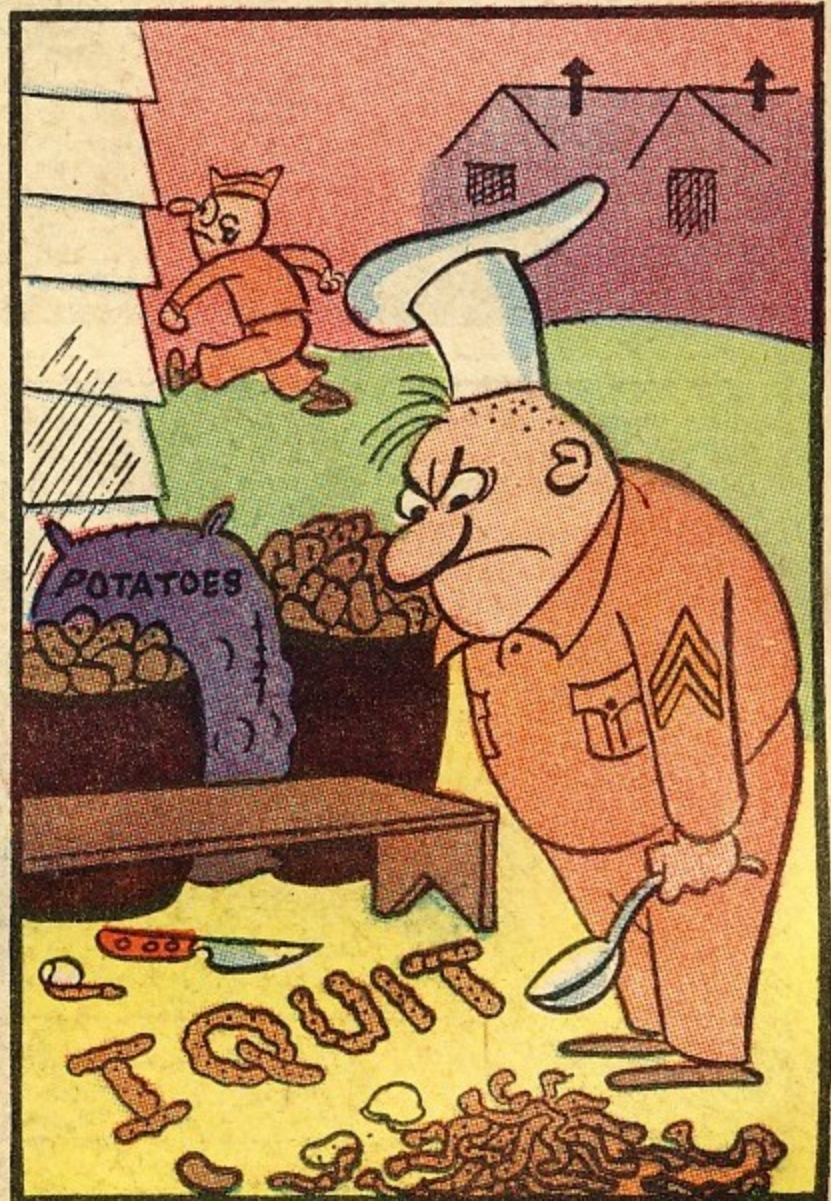
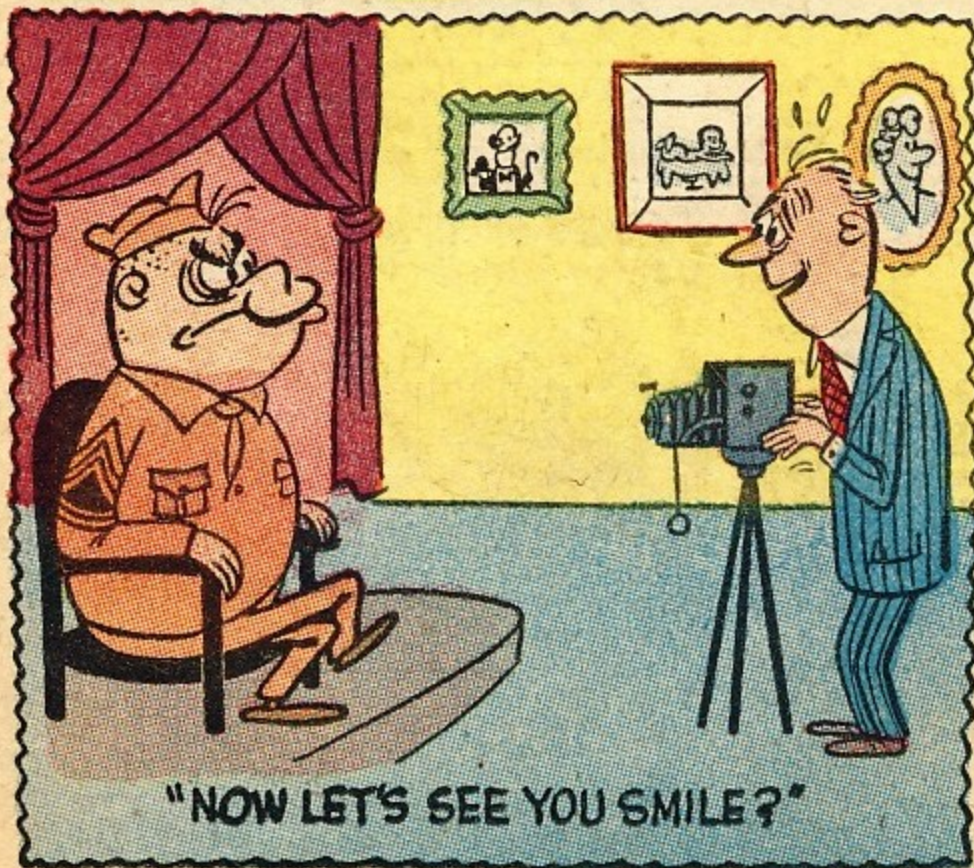
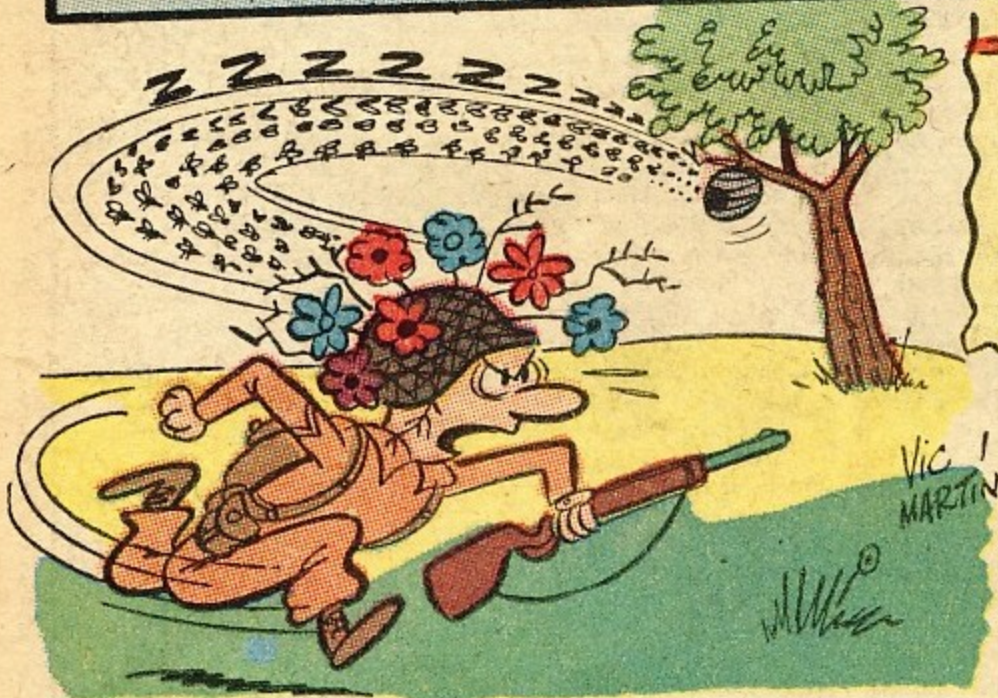
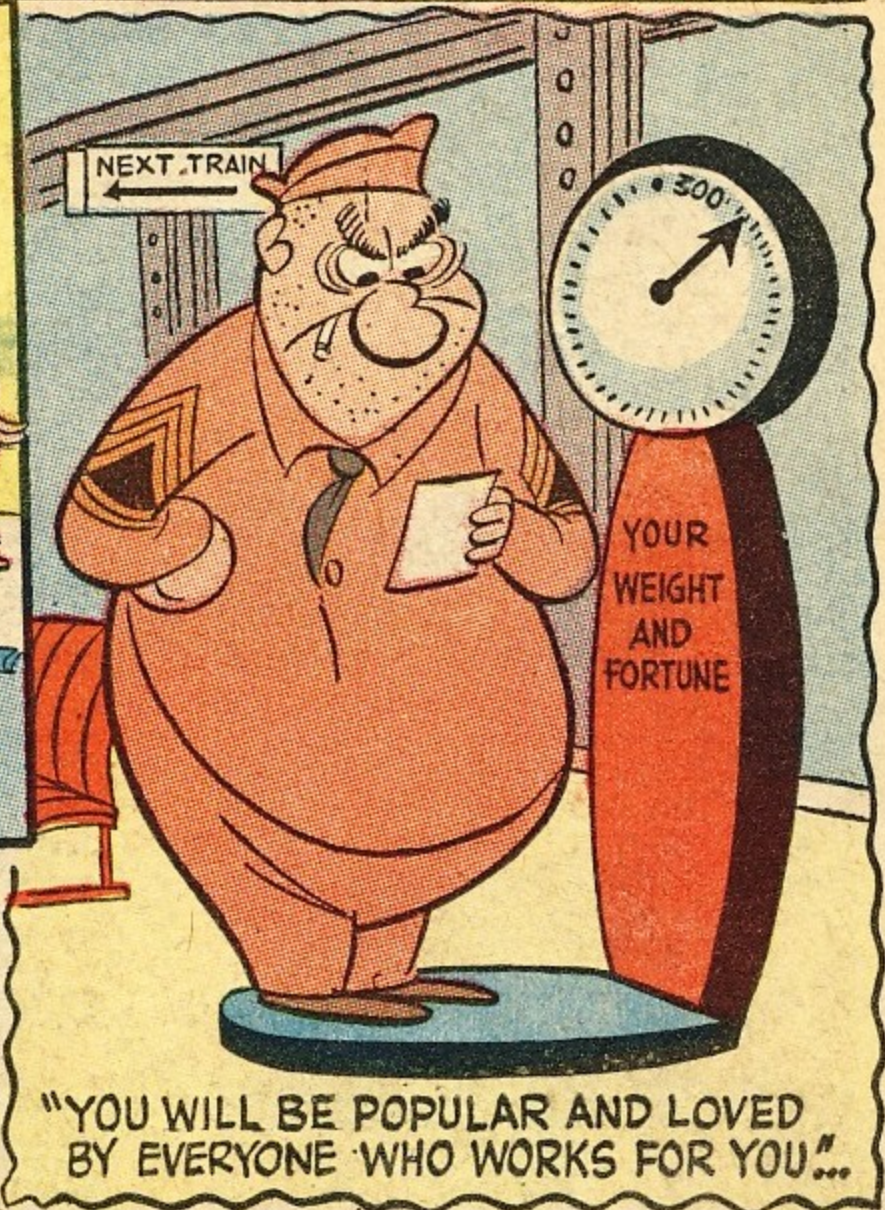
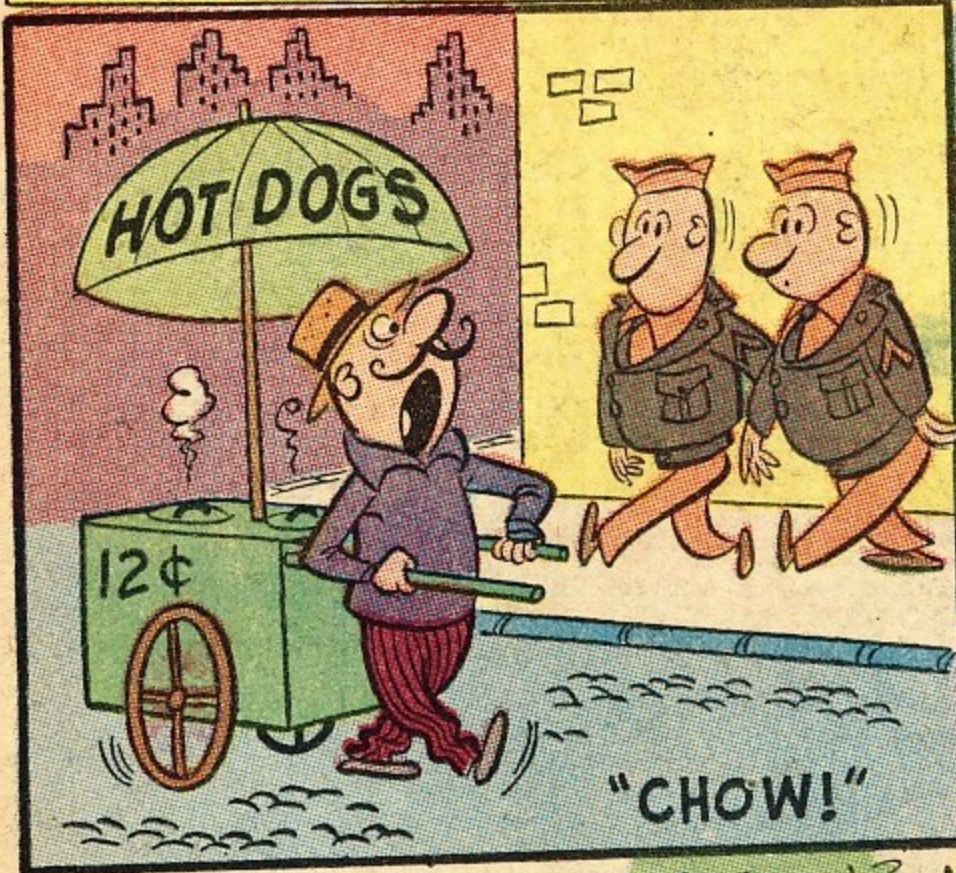
LATER... IN THE FULL OF THE MOON...



SO WHAT **HAPPENED** TO THIS
GUY "JACK-IN-TH'-BEANSTALK?"
HOW'D HE GIT DOWN?

The End

ARMY CHUCKLES



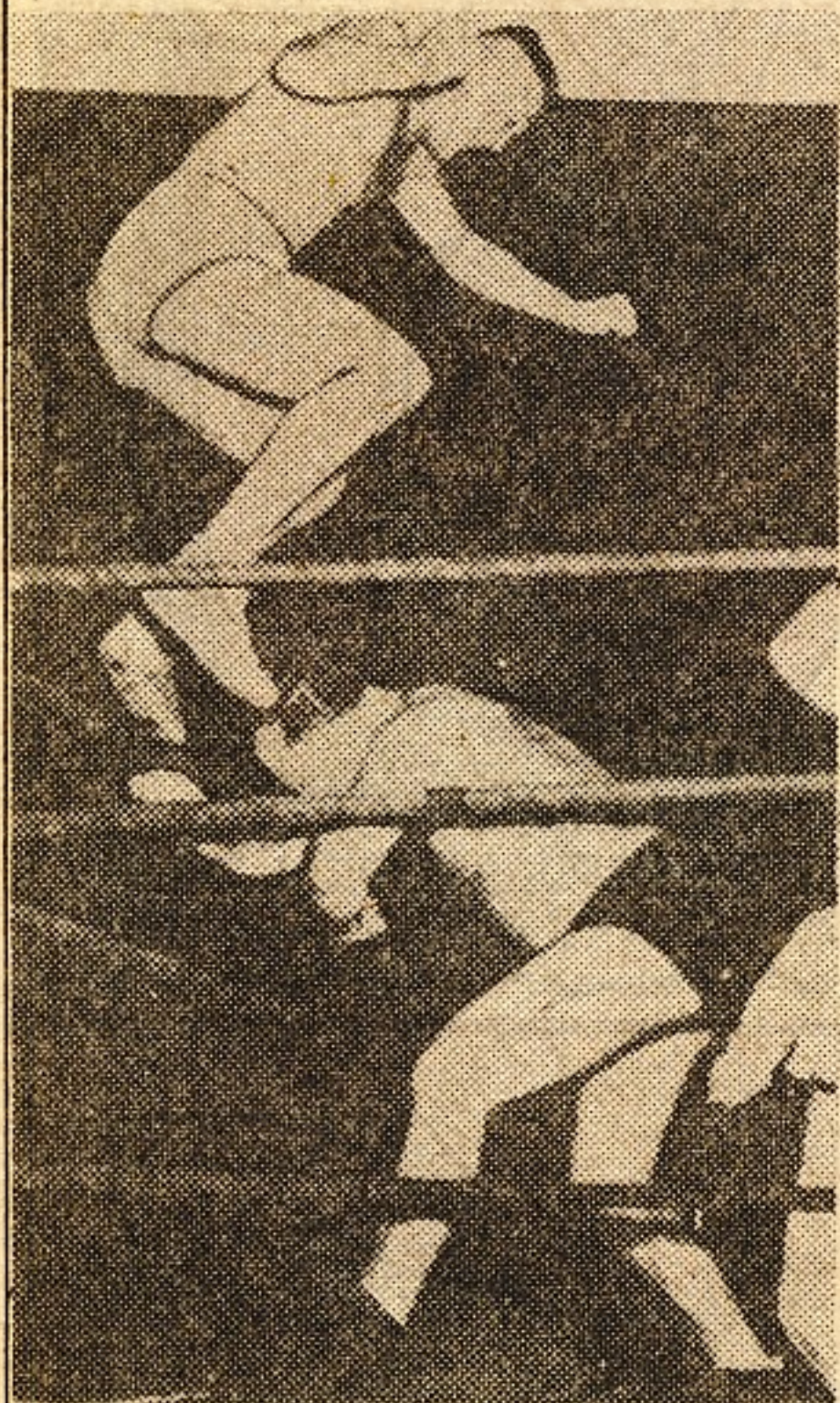
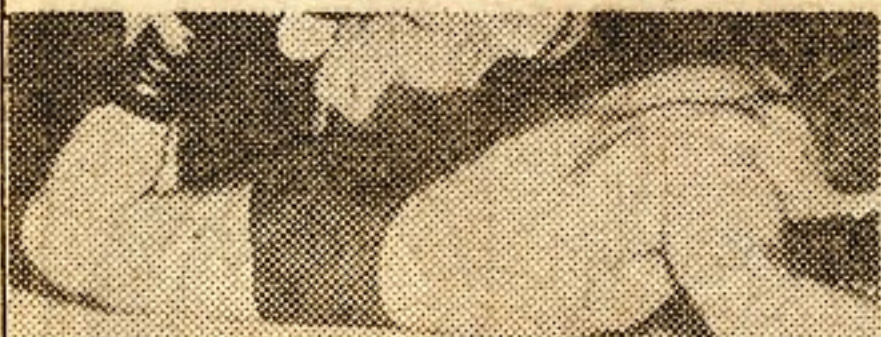
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A MORTAR SHELL! LET'S SCRAM OUTA HERE BEFORE IT GOES OFF!

WE CAN'T — NOT WITH REDS ALL AROUND US!

JUST SIT TIGHT AND PRAY IT'S A DUD!

AS OUR STORY OPENS, JOE BURCH AND SERGEANT MULVANEY RETURN FROM A ROUTINE PATROL ...

MORE GREEN TROOPS, SARGE! I FEEL KINDA SORRY FOR 'EM!

SO WOULD I, IF I DIDN'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE NURSEMAIDIN' 'EM! HEY, LOOK!

AW, JONESY, LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO THE "DUKE'S" NICE, CLEAN UNEE-FORM!

ME? I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN'! IT AIN'T MY FAULT HIS FOOT SLIPPED!

AWRIGHT, YOU GUYS! KNOCK OFF THE CLOWN'!



A FEW DAYS LATER...



BURCH, THIS NEW MAN, BATES, IS TAKING A LOT OF RIDING! I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP AN EYE ON HIM!

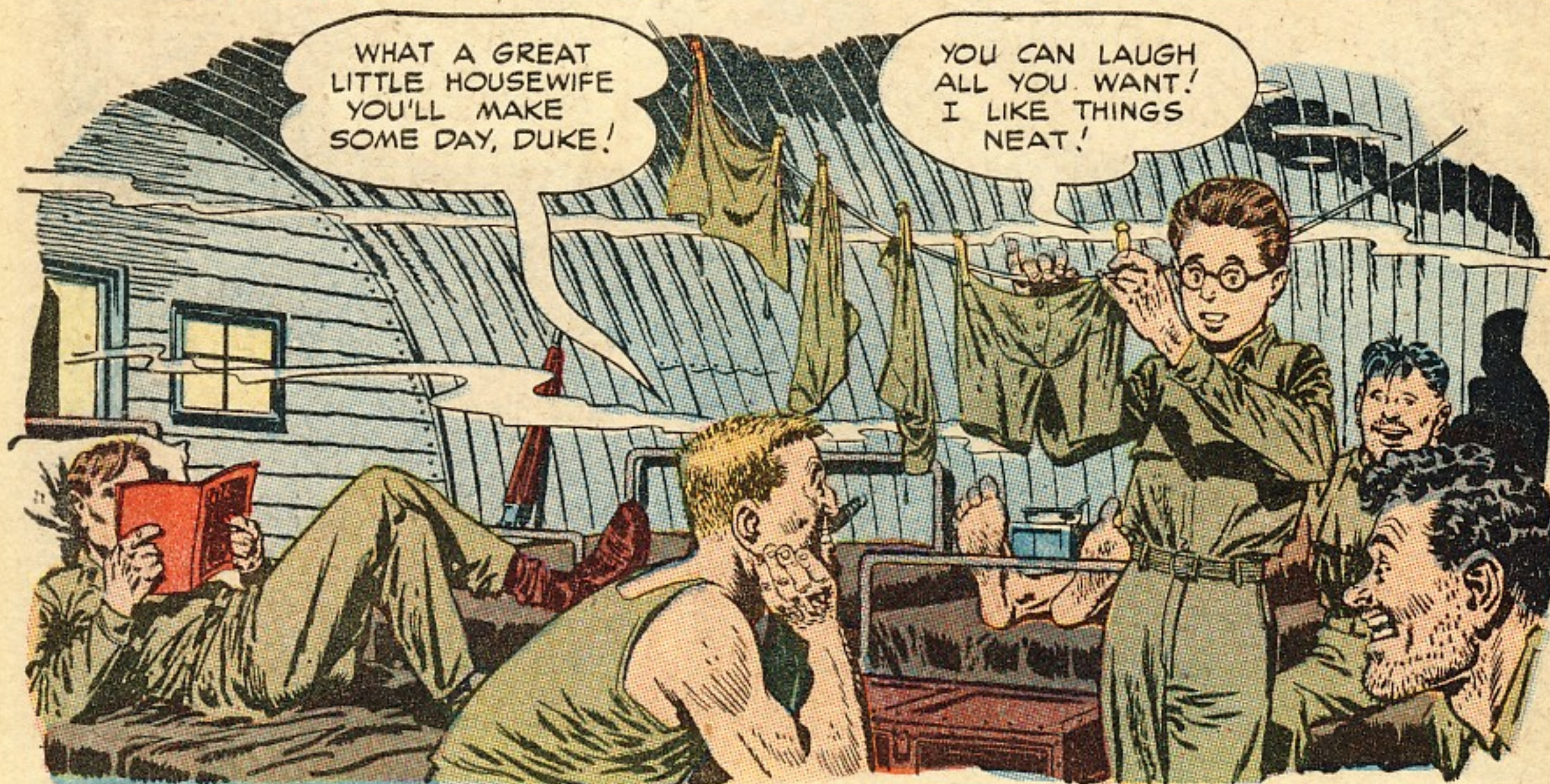
OKAY, LOOTENANT — BUT IT WON'T BE EASY! HE'S JUST A NATURAL-BORN VICTIM!



AW, COME ON, DUKE! WHAT'SA USE WASHIN' YOUR SOCKS? THEY'LL ONLY GET DIRTY AGAIN!

YOU MEN CAN LIVE LIKE PIGS IF YOU WANT TO! I'M USED TO BEING CLEAN!

ATTA BOY, DUKE! WHEN YOU GONNA GET US THEM LACE CURTAINS FOR OUR WINDOWS?



WHAT A GREAT LITTLE HOUSEWIFE YOU'LL MAKE SOME DAY, DUKE!

YOU CAN LAUGH ALL YOU WANT! I LIKE THINGS NEAT!

THE NEXT DAY AT MAIL CALL...



LOOK, JOE! MY BROTHER SENT ME AN ELECTRIC SHAVER!

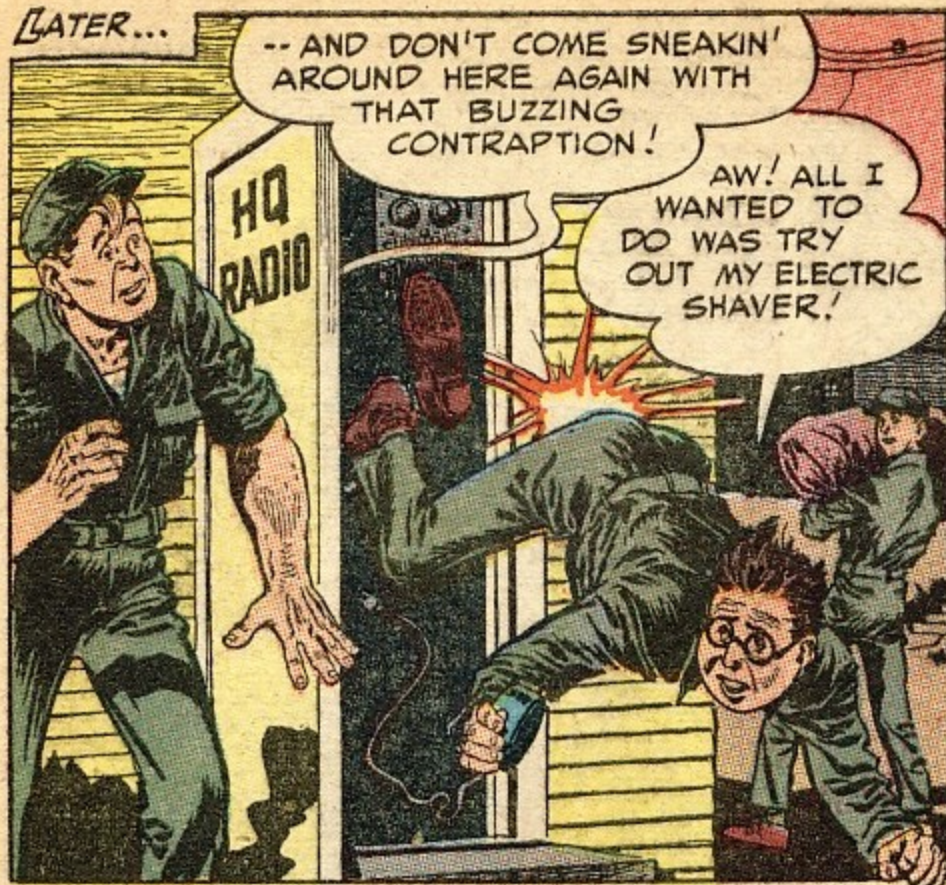
YEAH, IT'S NICE! BUT WHERE YA GONNA PLUG IT IN?



GEE, I NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT! BUT IF I COULD, I'D BE ABLE TO SHAVE EVERY DAY!

WELL, SAVE IT FOR WHEN YOU GO BACK STATESIDE!

LATER...



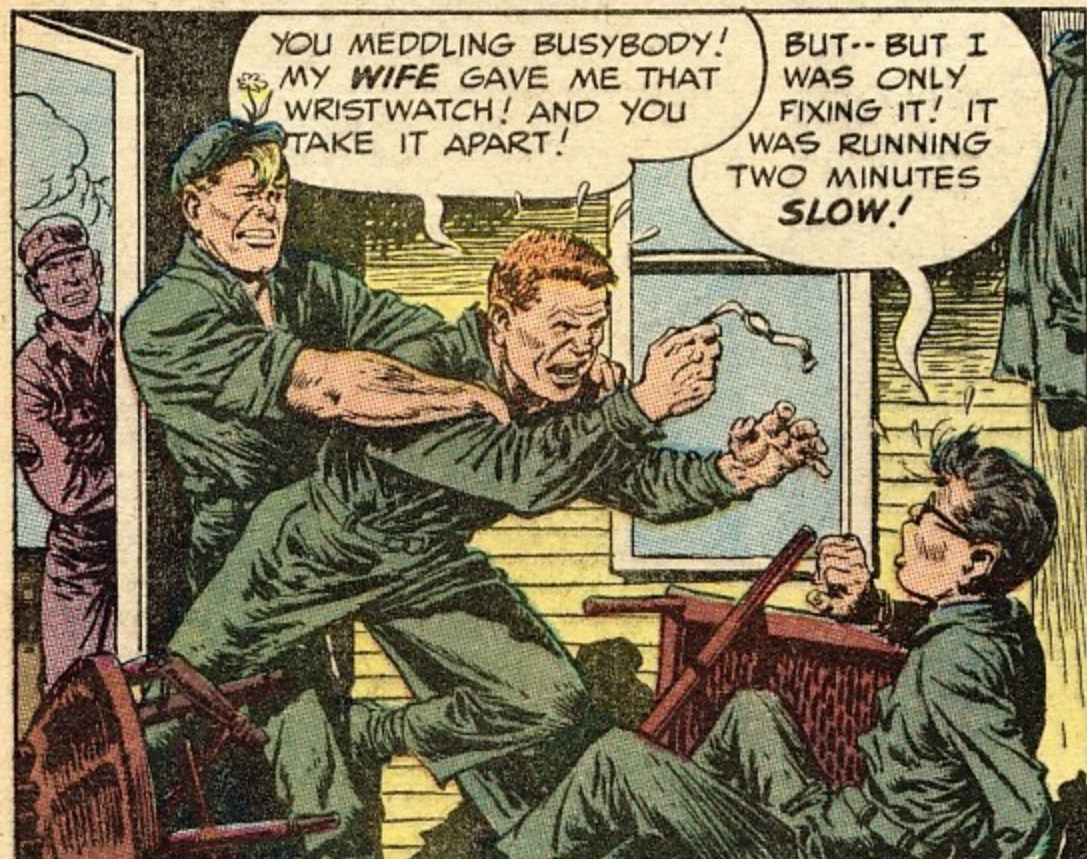
-- AND DON'T COME SNEAKIN' AROUND HERE AGAIN WITH THAT BUZZING CONTRAPTION!

AW! ALL I WANTED TO DO WAS TRY OUT MY ELECTRIC SHAVER!

THE NEXT DAY...

HEY, JOE! BETTER COME AND BREAK IT UP, BEFORE YOUR LITTLE FRIEND GETS HIMSELF KILLED!

HOLY SMOKE! WHAT NOW?



YOU MEDDLING BUSYBODY! MY *WIFE* GAVE ME THAT WRISTWATCH! AND YOU TAKE IT APART!

BUT-- BUT I WAS ONLY FIXING IT! IT WAS RUNNING TWO MINUTES SLOW!

BREAK IT UP, YOU GUYS! WHAT YOU NEED IS A LITTLE ACTION! AND YOU'RE GONNA GET IT, RIGHT QUICK!



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING...

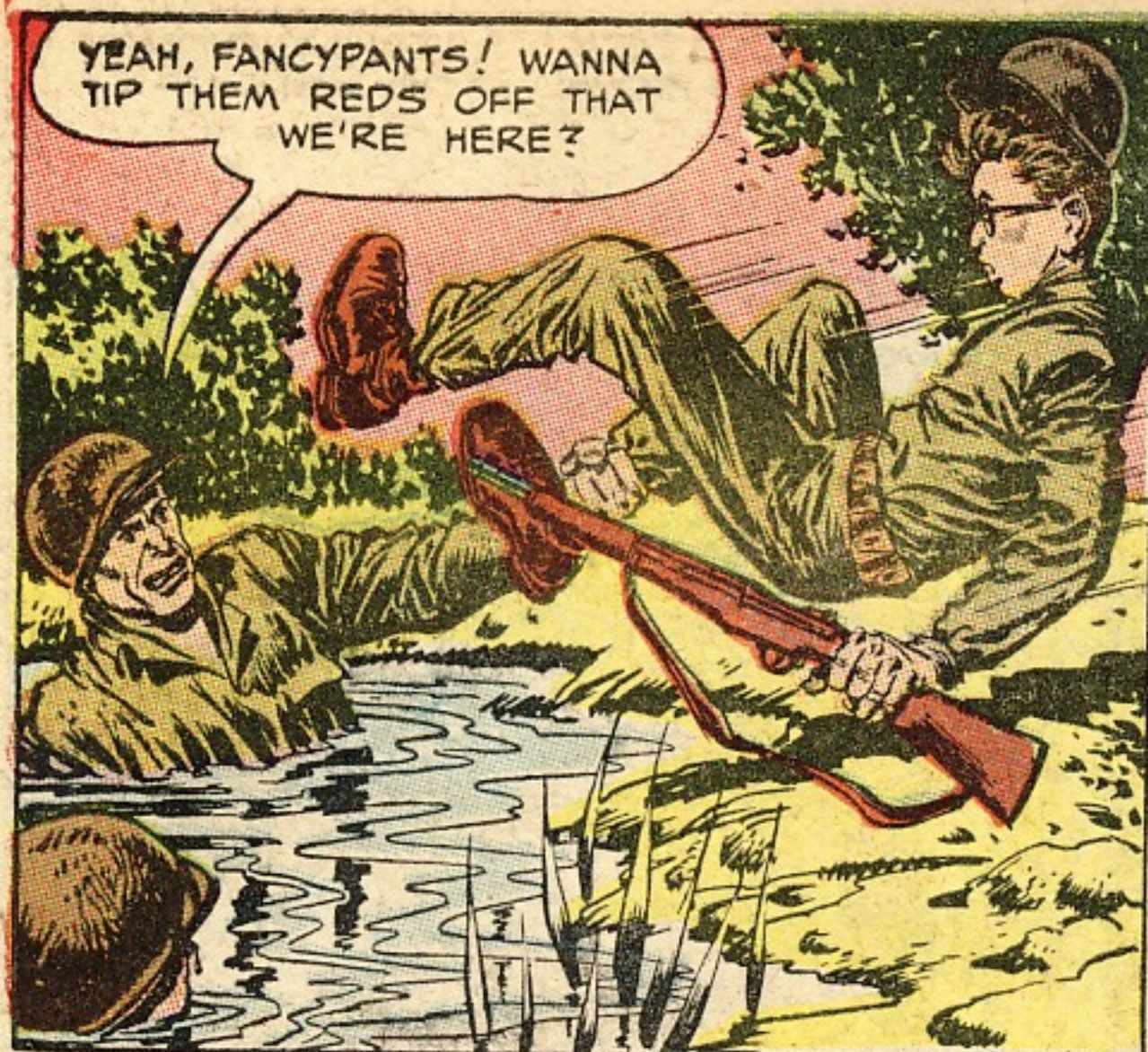


WE'LL HAVE TO KEEP OUR EYES PEELED! THERE'S LOTS OF RED PATROLS IN THESE WOODS!



QUICK, YOU GUYS! A RED TANK! DIVE INTO THE SWAMP!

UGH! IN ALL THAT MUD?



YEAH, FANCYPANTS! WANNA TIP THEM REDS OFF THAT WE'RE HERE?

AS THE MEN STRAGGLE WEARILY BACK TO CAMP...

YOU WERE PRETTY ROUGH ON THE DUKE, SARGE!

ROUGH? I AIN'T EVEN STARTED ON HIM YET! HE'S GOTTA LEARN THIS IS WAR, NOT A TEA PARTY!



THAT EVENING...

SOME GUYS SURE GOT ONE-TRACK MINDS! NOW HE'S TRYIN' TO RUN THAT SHAVER ON FLASHLIGHT BATTERIES!

POOR DUKE! I GUESS HE'LL NEVER LEARN!



BUT BY NEXT MORNING, THE LAUGHTER AND TEASING ARE FORGOTTEN ...

MEN, YOU'RE GOING UP FRONT NOW -- AND IT'S GOING TO BE PLENTY ROUGH! SO KEEP YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU -- AND GOOD LUCK!



HOURS LATER ...

HEY, SARGE, I DON'T SEE A SIGN OF OUR GUYS!

WELL, I HEAR **SOMEONE** COMIN'! WE BETTER GET OFF THIS ROAD!



HEY, SARGE! LOOKS LIKE WE LANDED IN A NEST OF REDS!

YEAH, THEY GOT US BOXED IN, BUT **GOOD!**





LOOK, SARGE! IF WE CAN PULL SOME BRANCHES OVER THIS, WE MIGHT GET COVER TILL THE REDS GO BY!

WELL--WE AIN'T GOT MUCH CHOICE! INSIDE, YOU GUYS!



WOW! THEM TANKS SOUND AWFUL CLOSE!

YEAH! AND THAT'S ONE KIND OF CATERPILLAR I'D HATE TO HAVE CRAWL OVER ME!



BOOM!

LISTEN! BIG GUNS! OUR GUYS KNOW WHERE THE REDS ARE!

YEAH, BUT I'D BE HAPPIER IF THEY KNEW WHERE **WE** ARE!



JUST THEN...

HOLY CATFISH! A MORTAR SHELL!

DON'T NOBODY TOUCH IT! MAYBE IT'LL TURN OUT TO BE A DUD-- IF WE'RE LUCKY!

AS THE DUKE STARTS TO APPROACH THE DANGEROUS MISSILE ...



HEY, SARGE, COULD I ...

GET AWAY FROM THERE, YOU-- YOU COOKIE PUSHER!



BUT, SARGE, I'M PRETTY HANDY! MAYBE-- IF I WORK FAST-- I COULD GET THE DETONATOR OUT!

YOU? I DOUBT IT! BUT GO AHEAD AND TRY-- WHAT HAVE WE GOT TO LOSE?

BREATHLESSLY, THE MEN WATCH THE TEN NIMBLE FINGERS THAT WILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH...

AT LAST...

HERE IT IS! WE'RE OKAY NOW!

WELL, WHATTA YOU KNOW! THE DUKE DELIVERED, AFTER ALL!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, AFTER A SUCCESSFUL ACTION, THE MEN RETURN TO CAMP...

HEY, DUKE, WHEN WE GET BACK, IF YOU WANT I'LL WASH YER SOCKS FOR YA!

AW, WHAT FOR? THEY'LL ONLY GET DIRTY AGAIN!



THE NEXT MORNING, THE DUKE BECOMES AN AUCTIONEER...

FELLOWS, THIS IS A "GRAB-BAG" AUCTION! YOU TAKE A CHANCE AND BID FOR THE WRAPPED-UP PACKAGE! HERE'S MINE!

HMM, THAT LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE HIS GOOD BINOCULARS!

I'LL BID FIFTY BUCKS!

SOLD!



IF WE HAD SOME DOUGH, WE COULD TAKE DUKE ON A REAL BINGE ON OUR NEXT PASS!

LET'S RAISE SOME MONEY! WE CAN HAVE A GRAB-BAG AUCTION! I'VE GOT JUST THE THING!



I GUESS THE SERGEANT WAS KINDA MAD WHEN HE UNWRAPPED THAT PACKAGE!

HA! HA! KINDA MAD! HE'S FIT TO KILL! FIFTY BUCKS HE BID, AND IT TURNS OUT HE'S BOUGHT HIMSELF YOUR ELECTRIC SHAVER!



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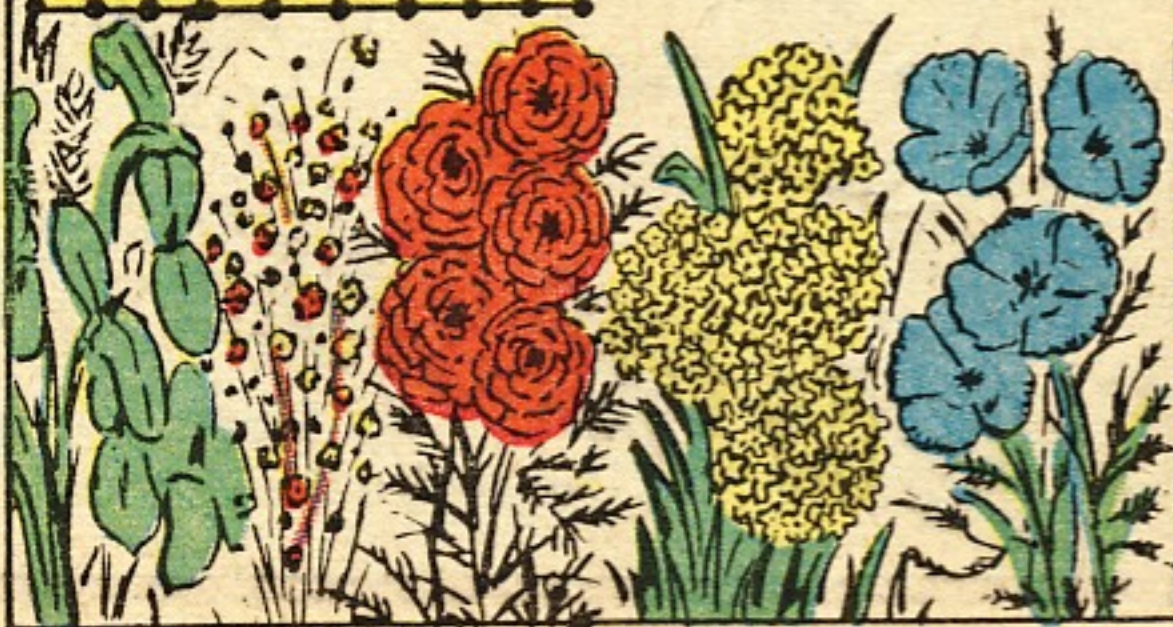
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